



FORBIDDEN PASTURES

**EDUCATION UNDER
APARTHEID**

**freda
troup**

GILL TREMLETT



International
Defence and Aid Fund
for Southern Africa
60p

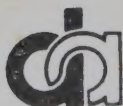
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Education under Apartheid

by
Freda Troup



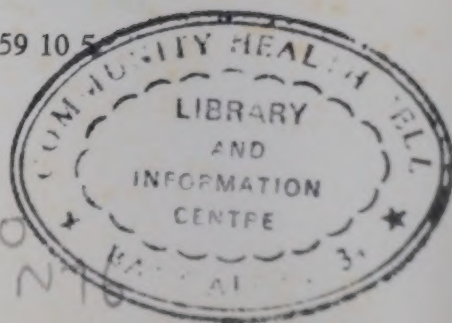
International Defence & Aid Fund
104 Newgate Street, London EC1
April 1976

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2nd impression March 1977

ISBN No. 0 904759 10 5



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CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
Introduction	5
I The Historical Background: 1658 to 1948	8
II The Nationalists take over	18
III African education today	30
IV Teachers, Courses, and Pupil Discontent	40
V Coloureds and Indians	49
VI Universities and Students	55
Illustrations	following page 32
Tables	66
References	69
Index	72

Two South African views on education

'My department's policy is that education should stand with both feet in the reserves and have its roots in the spirit and being of Bantu society. There Bantu education must be able to give itself complete expression and there it will be called upon to perform its real service. The Bantu must be guided to serve his own community in all respects. There is no place for him in the European community above the level of certain forms of labour. Within his own community, however, all doors are open . . . Until now he has been subjected to a school system which drew him away from his own community and mislead him by showing him the green pastures of European society in which he was not allowed to graze.'

(Dr. H. F. Verwoerd, Minister of Native Affairs, Senate,
7th June 1954)

'Education which helps to realise the potential of every individual plays an important part in creating (an) acceptable society. Such education serves society by making available to it every person's gifts and labours . . .

A further principle is that there should be equality of educational opportunity. This means that every person in society should have equal access to the best education which the state can provide and have available an education which is best suited to his age, ability and aptitude. This does not imply that the same education is suitable for all, nor does it imply that all people have the same capacities. But it does mean that the system of selection for education and the system of differentiation in education must be based on the criteria of ability, talent, quality and hard work of the individual and on the needs of all the members of society. On the other hand, criteria like colour, race, or creed, should be irrelevant in the public educational system'.

(Report of the Education Commission of the Study Project
on Christianity in Apartheid Society, 1971)

Introduction

Any discussion of education in South Africa, particularly education available to the Black sections of the population, must be presented against a background of conditions and attitudes which are not immediately educational. The fundamental assertion and maintenance of White supremacy go back to the very beginnings of South Africa as a colony of Western Europe, and have permeated every aspect of government since.

Four differentiated 'racial' groups live in South Africa and must be briefly defined. The **Africans** were in occupation of the north and east when the **White** settlers from the Netherlands arrived in the extreme south-west during the mid-17th century, though these two groups, one moving north and east, the other more slowly south and west, did not make contact until about a hundred years later.

In the meantime, the Khoikhoi (Hottentots), the original inhabitants of the Western Cape and the first indigenous people the Whites met, and whom they rapidly dispossessed, gradually became their servants. Within six years of settlement, slaves were being imported from the Indies and East and West Africa. The Khoikhoi were to merge, and eventually lose their separate identity, with the African and oriental slaves, local Africans and Whites to form the distinctive **Coloured** communities of, originally, the western and northern Cape. Soon the Whites developed a racial antagonism towards the Coloureds and a rigid master-servant relationship was established; but not until 1949 was marriage between Whites and Coloureds prohibited and intercourse between the groups was made illegal the following year. Intercourse between Whites and Africans has been prohibited since 1927.

The **Indian** population was introduced into Natal during the second half of the 19th century to work as indentured labour in the sugar plantations of the White, mainly British, settlers. When their contracts ended they were granted some land and residential rights. Their numbers grew; a few became prosperous. The Whites began to see in them rivals for land and commercial advantage, and enacted laws to keep the Indians in a subservient role. Like the Coloureds, therefore, they are victims of racial discrimination and have no political rights.

Neither the Coloureds nor the Indians however, were ever subjected to the strict and all-pervasive controls on labour, movement and residence which under the innocuous official term of 'influx control' affect every aspect of the lives of the African majority. The infamous pass laws, under which hundreds of ordinary men and women are arrested daily, and which have broken up countless thousands of African families, apply to the Africans only, and help to make them the most oppressed part of the entire population.

In mid-1974 the population of South Africa was 24.9 million people:

Africans	17.7 million
Whites	4.2 million
Coloureds	2.3 million
Asians	0.7 million

Both Whites and Africans are distributed throughout the country, while the Indians are concentrated in the Transvaal and Natal and the Coloureds in the Cape. But the Whites regard 87% of the country as being 'White South Africa', including all the ports and major cities and most of the mines and factories. The remaining 13% of the country, reservations of varying size, mostly small and scattered, is allocated to the Africans, although more of them live outside than inside the reserves (now officially called Bantu Homelands, and scheduled to get independence). Neither Coloureds nor Indians are acknowledged to have any territorial rights. And none of the Black groups has any part in the parliament or government of South Africa at national level.

Apartheid is the policy of the Nationalist Party which has ruled South Africa since 1948. (Officially the term 'separate development' is now preferred because apartheid is so notorious internationally.) Its essence has been to maintain the political, economic and social dominance of the Whites by a thorough-going separation of the races except in the sphere of labour where the Blacks must serve the Whites. Under Nationalist Party rule a rigid segregation has been enforced which determines the life prospects of each racial group from the cradle to the grave. A person's race classification determines his or her place of residence, the occupations that are customarily or by law reserved for that racial group, the wage rates that go with those occupations, the standards of living and health which are determined by those wage rates, and even the standards of the social services – including education – provided by the state. More can be inferred about an individual South African – background, status, prospects, rights, disabilities, hopes, frustrations – from knowing his or her racial group than from any other single factor.

Nowhere is this discriminatory pattern more clear, nowhere is it more thoroughly documented than in the field of education. This book traces the history of education in South Africa from the beginnings of the colonial period (chapter I). It then shows how the Nationalist Party took charge of African education in the early 1950s and shaped it to serve the wider aims of apartheid doctrine, despite the opposition of the African people and many professional educators (chapter II). Readers primarily concerned with contemporary affairs could, if they wish, omit these chapters and start with chapter III which examines African schooling today: government claims, literacy rates, financing, the double-session system, the high fall-out rates, mother tongue education, and other characteristic features of 'Bantu education'. In chapter IV the qualifications and pay of African, Coloured and Indian teachers are described and the contents of school curricula and text-books briefly discussed. Vocational and technical training for Africans is also outlined – a topic of growing importance in view of

the shortages of skilled labour in the apartheid economy. Against this background the mounting alienation of African pupils is illustrated from recent incidents.

Coloured and Indian education at school level is summarised in chapter V, and in chapter VI the higher education system is described, showing how the universities are also subject to the same discriminatory policies, and how most black students and some white students have resisted these policies and expressed wider political discontents. A few concluding tables furnish additional statistical information.

CHAPTER I

The Historical Background: 1658 to 1948

Education in South Africa started long before the arrival of the Dutch colonists in the middle of the seventeenth century. Traditional African communities educated their young, as all societies do. But the beginning of the colonial epoch did introduce something new – a written culture – which required a different educational system. The first modern school, in this sense, was opened in the Cape in 1658.

It was for the young slaves, in a batch of 170 slaves, the first to arrive from the Dutch East Indies, captured from a Portuguese ship a few weeks earlier. They were to be taught the Dutch language and rudiments of the Christian religion and were encouraged to be diligent with rewards of brandy and tobacco. They were to be efficient and pliant servants for their new masters.

To provide for the children of the burghers a second school was opened in 1663, with 12 European and five non-European pupils – four slave children and one Khoikhoi (Hottentot) child. It was free for the Black children while the White parents who could afford it paid a small fee. By 1676 the Church Council was asking for a separate school for the slaves.

Throughout the eighteenth century other small elementary schools grew up in Cape Town and the surrounding villages, mainly for European children, though slave children were also admitted. As the settlers spread further afield they became dependent on the itinerant school-master to give their children the elementary literacy that church membership, so important to the settlers, required. The children of the slaves were seldom allowed to join these classes.

In the earlier part of the eighteenth century missionary interest in South Africa began to flicker. In 1737 Georg Schmidt established a Moravian mission among the Khoikhoi at what is now Genadendal, the Vale of Grace, where he taught religion, Dutch and agriculture, but after disagreement with the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC) in Cape Town he left. Not until the end of the century did the Moravians take up the work again, teaching the Khoikhoi trades and agriculture and building up a flourishing settlement. They were unpopular with the colonists because they drew workers from the farms to the mission where, treated by the missionaries as fellow human beings, the Khoikhoi servants found a relative freedom and often had a much better education than was available to the colonists' own children. But in time some of the Whites came to recognise that Khoikhoi trained at the missions often made better servants than the rest.⁽¹⁾

Throughout most of the first part of the nineteenth century mixed schools were common in the towns and villages of the Cape, most of them mission schools, replacing the slave schools that existed before the emancipation of the slaves in 1830.⁽²⁾

At the beginning of that century missionaries of the London Missionary Society began to arrive. They went first to the turbulent Eastern Frontier where the colonists were pushing further into African-occupied territory and dispossessing the Africans of their lands. In 1819 Dr John Philip, for long the most well known missionary in South Africa, arrived in the Cape as superintendent of the LMS missions. In consultation with Stockenström, Commissioner-General of the Eastern Province, the LMS established settlements for some of those Africans displaced by the wars on the frontier. Their missionaries also settled among the mixed groups of semi-nomads on the distant northern borders of the Colony. The missionaries of numbers of other denominations were also arriving and mission stations providing some level of schooling were scattered widely over the country.

After the British occupation of the Cape in 1806, teachers were brought from England, English became the medium of instruction (beginning the long cultural alienation of the earlier settlers) and the English system of education was introduced. New and improved schools were established for White and Coloured children, free schools were introduced for the needy and children were to be admitted to government schools without distinction of race. It was made compulsory for slave owners to send slave children between three and ten years of age to school for at least three days a week, but the colonists resented this loss of child labour and again the regulations were not enforced.⁽³⁾

After the promulgation of the 50th Ordinance in 1828 which gave equal civil rights to the Khoikhoi and the emancipation of the slaves in 1830, many slaves and Khoikhoi dispersed over the Colony and the need for more schools became urgent. The government restated its policy, in 1839, that 'at all times every government seminary will be accessible to every individual of the community'.⁽⁴⁾

The Moravians were expanding their activities and, in 1838, they began to train Coloured teachers at Genadendal. This was many years before any White teachers were trained in South Africa.

Missions and schools

It was decided in 1841 that needy mission schools should be given state grants to augment the salaries of the teachers. Subsidies were also made to settlers in more remote areas who erected school buildings and elected a school committee. Few Coloured communities, however, could afford to take advantage of this arrangement.⁽⁵⁾ It set a precedent, however, for a future expansion of educational facilities for Blacks.

The Lovedale school had been established in 1824 near Alice in the Eastern Province by the Glasgow Missionary Society (later the Free Church of Scotland) and opened with 30 pupils. After being forced to close on more than one occasion

in the course of the frontier wars it was re-established and, in 1842, was extended to include an institution to train catechists and teachers (again, long before any government training of teachers for Whites existed). The training college began with eleven African students and nine White (mostly the sons of missionaries).⁽⁶⁾

Teachers tended to become the leaders of the local Christian communities. The Mfengu (Fingo), a community welded from refugees and people displaced by the earlier wars to the north-east and thus divorced from their original kinsmen and homes, were open to new ideas and particularly eager for education; they eventually formed an important part of the Christian and westernised community on the frontier. The Xhosa, on the other hand, who had borne the brunt of the frontier wars, had been dispossessed by the Whites and had retained a strong local patriotism, were more conservative, often strongly anti-White and resistant to the new influences.

Education became a measure of status, leading to the later accusations that it divorced the educated from the mass of their own people. Very often educated people refused to support their chiefs in the wars and skirmishes that still from time to time broke out. Educated families formed links of friendship and of marriage across the tribal, language and national frontiers. (Many of the leading Africans in South Africa and leaders of later independent African states to the North were fellow students at institutions such as Lovedale and Fort Hare.) Those who were themselves educated set much store on education for their children, families trying to send at least one child to boarding school for higher education, other children helping financially if necessary.⁽⁷⁾

After the Cape received representative government in 1851 a fund from Revenue was set up for 'Aborigines Development'. The Governor, Sir George Grey, who had a great belief in the importance of education, planned to 'subsidise missions training Bantu youth in industrial occupation to fit them to act as interpreters, evangelists and school masters among their own people.' This he intended as part of his effort to achieve a pacification of the border.⁽⁸⁾

In this context, a Superintendent of Education said in 1891, 'the schools are hostages for peace, and if for that reason only £12,000 a year is given to schools in the Transkei, Tembuland and Griqualand, the amount is well spent; but that is not the only reason - to lift the Aborigines gradually . . . to the platform of civilised and industrial life is the great object of the educational vote.'⁽⁹⁾

From the middle of the nineteenth century, grants to some of the mission schools had gradually increased and a state inspectorate had been established. The aim was explicitly (as the Transkeian Territories General Council was to be told by an educational official in 1908), 'to give the Natives the same education as the Europeans were getting . . . a very large number of Europeans as well as Natives had to work together and they would work much better if they had a common basis and foundation of knowledge. If they were educated in different directions they would not understand each other.'⁽¹⁰⁾

Grey encouraged the establishment of industrial and agricultural training departments at Lovedale and other institutions, and Lovedale soon added a

printing and bookbinding section, where bibles, books and journals in African languages and in English have been produced in great number. At that time, African and White students at Lovedale lived in the same building, but they slept in different dormitories and ate different food at separate tables.⁽¹¹⁾ The schools of the Eastern Cape were open to both boys and girls.

Lovedale in its time produced not only African men and women of high distinction but also (before a more modern, systematic segregation took over) some eminent Whites. Of some 3,448 Africans who passed through Lovedale, 700 entered the professions; many went to the United States.⁽¹²⁾

In 1858 the Anglican Zonnebloem Training School was founded 'for the education of children of African chiefs and of pupils of all races.' Towards the end of the century half the students were African and half were White and Coloured; by the turn of the century the majority were Coloured and by 1920 it had become an institution entirely for Coloureds.⁽¹³⁾ Not until 1960 was provision again made in special schools for the sons of chiefs.

Education in the Cape

The Cape Education Act of 1865 provided state aid for three types of schools: public, mission and native schools, though in mission schools, which were open to all races, the grant could be used only for teachers' salaries. Until 1921 there was no differentiation between the sort of education given to Coloured children at mission schools and that of European children. In 1885 the Superintendent of Education reported that there were over 9,000 White children at mission schools, paying between 1d. and 3d. a week.⁽¹⁴⁾

By the 1890s, however, the Education Department was beginning to discourage the attendance of Whites at mission schools, where fees were lower than at secular schools. The effects of industrialisation were beginning to be felt and White and Black were coming into a more directly competitive situation. Colonist pressures for segregation were increasing and the government began to set up schools for Whites. Legislation in 1893 allowed the subsidising of mission schools for White children. The Cape Superintendent-General of Education had reported in 1889 that the first duty of the Government was assumed to be 'to recognise the position of the European colonists as holding the paramount influence, social and political, and to see that the sons and daughters of the colonists . . . should have at least such an education . . . as will fit them to maintain their unquestioned superiority and supremacy in this land.'⁽¹⁵⁾

In 1905 the Cape School Board Act established separate public schools; nevertheless, the Act still declared, 'the doors to the higher callings in life shall be open to the Native.'⁽¹⁶⁾ Another deep-seated White attitude however, was expressed by the Superintendent-General for Education in 1909, when he wrote: 'White children, especially girls, should not be brought into daily contact with Coloured boys of the common street type.'⁽¹⁷⁾ Segregation in schooling in the Cape was now well on its way.

Missionary societies of many denominations had been establishing religious

and training centres widely over South Africa throughout the course of the nineteenth century. The development of Lovedale has been outlined as the first and best-known of them all, but many of the others gave training of a high standard. But of the great numbers of elementary schools that proliferated, very many – being short of funds, ill-equipped, with inadequately trained and paid teachers and children often under-fed, over-tired and staying too short a time to benefit – gave the merest smattering of elementary letters and touched only a fraction of the child population.

Whatever the high educational aims expressed by statesmen and in policy documents, the fact was that education for the Blacks depended on the White parliament which supplied the funds and the White South African public which provided the future employment. The standards required were, for the most part, bare literacy sufficient to provide useful servants, miners, labourers and messengers. Black teachers were needed to give this basic schooling; Black clergymen could do no harm converting their own peoples; doctors, lawyers and journalists, again serving the Black populations, would come up only in small numbers, presenting no competition to the Whites. But with the growth of a White artisan and managerial class, Blacks were not acceptable as skilled or semi-skilled workers; that whole sphere was to be reserved for Whites only. These attitudes developed slowly over generations in the Cape under lingering *laissez-faire* British influence; in the rest of the country, settled by racially doctrinaire trekkers or the later industrial-orientated British, they were there ready-made with the first settlement and with the first establishment of missions.

The other provinces

In the remoter parts of the Cape and further north in what is now the Transvaal and Orange Free State, education for the Whites, let alone for Blacks, had lagged far behind. From the 1870s, however, when the population of the Orange Free State became stable, great progress in the establishment of schools there was made, partly financed from the sale of Crown lands and from the proceeds of the sales of other loot taken from Africans in the various earlier battles and raids.⁽¹⁸⁾ By the end of the century there was compulsory education for White children in the OFS.

For White children on the farms a farm school system was introduced (not dissimilar to that available to Africans half a century later), the Government paying the teachers' salaries if the farmers supplied the buildings. The Cape system of itinerant teachers was also adopted. In rural Natal and the Transvaal similar systems were introduced but, especially in the Transvaal, the educational level and attendance at school remained very low.

For most of the Africans in the OFS and the Transvaal the position was very much worse. The first mission schools had been set up north of the Orange River in 1823 to serve wandering San (Bushman) and Korana people, and slowly they increased in number but received no state aid. A Dutch Reformed Church

mission for example, was established at Witziesshoek in 1865 but received no grant from the Volksraad until 1878.

Missions had begun to function north of the Vaal River as early as 1822, but the population was sparse and fugitive after the Zulu and Ndebele raids of the period and no educational work of a lasting nature began until 1842. Until after the Anglo-Boer War (1902) African education in the Transvaal relied entirely upon missionary endeavour with no aid from the state.⁽¹⁹⁾

In the towns and the reserves mission schools of varying quality and accessibility did function, but the farmers remained strongly opposed (then as later) to education for their labourers or to teaching the Native more than 'what is necessary for him to know in order to become a good subject during life, and to entertain the expectation of better things hereafter.'⁽²⁰⁾

In Natal the position was somewhat different. Refugees from the wars in Zululand were pouring in and settling in great numbers among the Europeans. The British Administration made grants of land to the missions to be held in trust for the Africans; a number of mission reserves were set up and Africans encouraged to settle on them.

In 1853 the American Congregationalists founded the Adams Missionary Institution on the coast south of Durban, another institution of note. An Ordinance of 1856 established a system which would include religious education and instruction in English; it was administered by the Governor and financed from 'reserved funds'. Government and government-aided schools were open to all classes of the population, the Non-European children being expected 'to conform in all respects to European habits and customs'.

In 1875 the Indian Immigrant School Board was set up (Indians had begun to come to Natal in 1860 as indentured labour for the sugar plantations), and the first school opened in 1883. In the early days the Indians had shown little interest in formal schooling on account of religious, cultural and language differences, and progress was slow.⁽²¹⁾

In 1884 African education passed under control of the Council of Education which controlled grants to European schools. Under Sir Theophilus Shepstone, the British-born administrator who from 1845 onwards played a key role in Natal's native administration, the aims of native policy had been to foster segregation of the races, to preserve as much as possible and use the tribal organisation and communal land tenure, and to extend the powers of the chiefs and codify Native Law. Education was shaped accordingly and there began a differentiation between the races. In 1886 a special syllabus was drawn up for elementary Native schools (not until 1922 did the Cape schools have a special syllabus) and the next year the first examination for the Native Teachers' Certificate was held. Natal received responsible government in 1893 and the next year control of Native Education was placed under the Superintendent of Education, funds being voted by parliament. A system of government schools for Africans was founded thereafter. From 1899 Indians (except for infants and girls until 1905) were no longer admitted to European schools.⁽²²⁾

Among ordinary Whites in South Africa, hostility to the 'cheeky Kaffir', that is, the African with some education and insufficient servility, has never died. *The Christian Express* in 1907 put the common view: 'the defects of the uneducated man', it wrote, 'are balanced by the ease with which, owing to his simplicity and ignorance, he can be exploited as an economic asset'.⁽²³⁾

After the Anglo-Boer War the ideology of what later became known as Christian National Education was adopted in the OFS and Transvaal, partly in reaction against the British 'anglicization' policy in the schools. About 200 schools for their children were established from funds collected from the settler community, showing that the Afrikaner had no intention of abandoning his language and traditions. The schools could not be maintained for long, but the ideals instilled lingered on and bore fruit in the next generation.

When the four colonies were united by the Act of Union in 1910, education (except higher education) for all sections of the population, by then a sensitive and highly charged political area, was given into the control of the individual provinces (which the colonies then became).

Education in the Union after 1910

Each of the four provinces had developed its own individual system of Native taxation and education (which was to become increasingly financed from Native taxation) in consequence proceeded at very different rates in each. But in the two decades after the Anglo-Boer war progress in African education was slow. For example, in 1905 2.1% of the whole African population was at school (none in post-primary classes), at an average unit cost of 13/6d; by 1925, 4.1% was in school (3,752 pupils in post-primary classes) at a unit cost of £2.0.5d, (compared with £20.4.10d for Whites). Between 1901 and 1910 five Africans matriculated; between 1910 and 1920, 22 Africans matriculated.⁽²⁴⁾

With a remarkably optimistic faith in these circumstances, at a number of meetings during 1905 Africans discussed and received widespread support for the project of founding a predominantly Black university college. By the end of 1912, £8,000 had been donated by the Transkeian Territories General Council (an African local government body) and contributions were promised by the High Commission territories, missionary and other bodies and individuals. The South African government promised a contribution of £600. The University College of Fort Hare opened in the Eastern Province in 1916. It began as a senior high school until sufficient students could be enrolled for university courses taking the external examinations of the University of South Africa. Like Lovedale, it drew students* from all over Southern and Eastern Africa, a mixing which was valued and sought.⁽²⁵⁾

In 1920, all fees for primary schools in the Cape were abolished. In the Transvaal, on the other hand, a tax was imposed on Africans over and above the £2 poll tax payable at the time, as the province was finding the education of

*For some of the best-known names, see Ch. VI below.

Africans too costly. The Union Government stepped in the next year and debarred the provinces from imposing any direct taxation on Africans. They had to spend from government subsidies no less on education than had been spent in 1921-22. The Governor General was empowered to make grants to any province for the extension of education from the direct taxes imposed on Africans by Parliament. The result was that the provinces thereafter regarded Native Education as having been taken over by the government and they spent no more on it than the government gave in subsidies.

The Cape followed earlier practices in Natal (1886) and the Transvaal (1904) and in 1922 introduced separate primary courses and curricula for Africans. The following year, despite objections from Coloured parents who wanted their children to have the same education as Whites, curricula for Coloured children 'adapted to their needs' were introduced. In the OFS in 1924 a special syllabus for Africans was also introduced. The foundations of apartheid in education were being laid, although at that time the secondary school syllabus remained virtually the same for all races in each province.

A further more serious, but more subtle, discriminatory move than differentiation of syllabuses was made by the Apprenticeship Act of 1922. By stipulating minimum educational qualifications of eight years' schooling the Act effectively prevented Africans and, to a slightly lesser extent, Indians and Coloureds from obtaining apprenticeships, thus giving Whites an enormous advantage in industry.⁽²⁶⁾

The general educational position was so bad by 1923 that conferences of Africans at Bloemfontein and Pretoria demanded that, in view of the neglect in the OFS and the Transvaal, the Union government should take full control of African education. This met with no immediate response, but in 1925 changes were made in the financing of African education. In terms of the Native Taxation and Development Act, a Native Development Fund (which in 1936 became the South African Native Trust) was created into which a sum of £340,000 a year, being an amount equal to the expenditure on African education in 1921-22, was transferred from the Consolidated Revenue Fund. This remained constant until 1944. Further, one-fifth of the General Taxation paid by Africans was added to the Fund, a proportion which, as time went by, increased until in 1943 the whole amount would be credited to the Fund, four-fifths of it earmarked for education.

During the next ten years the enrolment of African pupils increased by 75%, whereas expenditure rose only by 50%. Conditions deteriorated so severely that in 1935 an Inter-Departmental Committee was appointed to report on the Provincial systems of education and make recommendations for the future.

The Committee held it to be true that 'there is no difference in the ultimate aim of education whether you are educating Black people or White people . . . Practically considered, the aim in the two cases is not the same because the two social orders for which education is preparing White and Black are not identical...'

Among the Committee's recommendations was that African education should be financed by the Government on the same principle as operated for Whites;

the grant suggested for Africans was £3.12.9d a head (that for Whites at the time was about £20 and for Coloureds £5). However, no action was taken until 1945 and the shortage of funds became increasingly pronounced.⁽²⁷⁾

While education for Blacks stagnated officially, there were fringe activities of some consequence in this immediate pre-war period, when there was considerable debate on matters such as the conception of the master-race and of racialism. For example, during 1939, NUSAS (the National Union of South African Students) resolved to admit Fort Hare students to membership. This caused a fundamental breach and the Afrikaans universities broke away to form their own *Afrikanse Studentebond*.

At about the same time an Institute for Christian National Education was formed. Outside of the public limelight, then concentrated on the approaching war, it worked out a detailed policy, primarily for White education, which was to be of profound importance a decade later.

With the actual outbreak of war and South Africa's participation, Hertzog's ideological colour-conscious regime was replaced by Smuts's more pragmatic approach to government. Smuts required a widespread support for the country's war effort and military and industrial recruits from all sectors of the population; some official interest began to be shown in Black progress, including progress in education. In 1941 the Native Affairs Commission abolished school fees in all government and government-aided primary schools, though fees in secondary schools and training colleges still varied greatly.

As the war situation improved, in 1943 J. H. Hofmeyr, Finance Minister and the most liberally minded member of Smuts's cabinet, introduced one free meal a day for all school children, and proposed some small improvements in the financing of African education. But by 1945 the government was still spending only £3.17.10d a year on each African school-child, whereas for Coloureds and Asians the figure was £10.16.2d and for Whites it was £38.5.10d. The ratio of expenditure as between Whites and Africans had remained virtually constant at 10:1 for at least 15 years.⁽²⁸⁾

This figure gives only a poor indication of the racial discrimination and injustice entailed, inasmuch as it leaves out of account the fact that most White children attended school, whereas most Africans did not. The table below indicates better the real scale of the disparity:

Annual per capita expenditure on education⁽²⁹⁾

Year	(1) Whites	(2) Coloureds and Asians	(3) Africans
1930	£4.13.2	£0.10.5	£0.2.1
1945	£7. 4.7	£1.19.8	£0.6.0

When in 1945 the financing of African education was placed on an entirely new basis, all funds being paid from the Consolidated Revenue Fund, it was a long overdue reform.

As the war drew to a close the administration ran into serious domestic problems. Black and White workers had streamed from the rural areas into the towns and the expanding industries; there had been no building and accommodation was short, especially for Blacks. Shanty towns mushroomed round the cities. Colour-bars in industry had been lowered to allow Black workers to make good the shortfall in Whites. No proper provision had been made to absorb the returning ex-service men. There was overcrowding, disturbances and discontent. The Nationalists had been exploiting grievances to the full and in particular raised the old rallying cry of '*Die swart gevaar*' (the black menace), which had always succeeded in drawing support in the past, only now it was subtly clothed in a whole new philosophy of *apartheid*. Smuts was defeated and the Nationalists took over the government in 1948.

CHAPTER II

The Nationalists take over

One of the Nationalist government's first acts was to appoint the Eiselen Commission on Native Education in 1949 to formulate 'the principles and aims of education for Natives as an independent race, in which their past and present, their inherent racial qualities, their distinctive characteristics and aptitude and their needs under the ever-changing social conditions are taken into consideration . . .'; to suggest how the existing system should be reformed to conform with these aims; and 'to prepare Natives more effectively for their future occupations'.⁽¹⁾

The 'principles and aims' had in fact already been laid down in outline by Nationalist Party theorists. To understand what the Eiselen Commission was trying to do we must look briefly at the ways in which Afrikaner nationalists had mapped out the principles according to which apartheid was to be implemented in the field of education.

Already, in 1948, the de Villiers Commission on Technical and Vocational Training, while allowing in theory that the educational system should be the same for all races, said consideration must be given to background, environment and occupational opportunities. This murky euphemism expresses a key argument, viz. that Africans should receive an education tailored to the (limited) job opportunities available to them. This idea has become part of the stock-in-trade of the rationale of discriminatory and inferior education for Africans in South Africa. It is one part of a vicious circle of denial from which the African cannot escape. The other part of the circle justifies the exclusion of Africans from (semi-)skilled jobs, and even from civil rights, on the grounds of their educational backwardness. As we shall see, such ideas have shaped the fate of African children for many years. But first it is necessary to examine the approach of the Nationalists to White education.

When the Nationalists came to power on the doctrine of apartheid in 1948, they had ready an up-dated version of so-called Christian National Education (CNE) – narrower in philosophy, more chauvinist and of wider applicability than the Transvaal version of 50 years earlier.

Christian National Education (CNE)

The ideals of CNE had been fostered over the years, particularly at Potchefstroom University. In the heated nationalistic climate engendered by the Voortrekker celebrations in 1938 and under the auspices of the Federation of Afrikaans Cultural Organisations (FAK), an Institute for CNE was established to formulate a detailed policy. After years of preparation, a pamphlet containing a

distillation of CNE principles was published in 1948. Its preface was by Prof. H. C. van Rooy, Rector of Potchefstroom University and Chairman, not only of the FAK, but also of the secret Afrikaner Broederbond organisation (an extremely powerful combination of top jobs). As well as professors, educationalists and clergy, the widely influential signatories included Dr. E. G. Jansen, later to be governor-general of the Union and Dr. T. E. Donges, a future Minister of Finance.

The pamphlet appeared in February 1948 and before the year's end the Nationalists were in power and in a position to begin to implement their educational policy. The CNE pamphlet⁽²⁾ advanced extreme Calvinist and fundamentalist doctrine as the educational basis. The word *Christian* in this context was defined as 'according to the creed of the three Afrikaner Churches'; *Nationalist* as 'imbued with the love of one's own, especially one's own language, history and culture'. The key subject should be religion (study of the bible and the three South African creeds). All teaching should be nationalist.

'... It is God's will that man should master the earth and rule over it and He has given to each nation its own particular national task in bringing about His will. Education should enable the young to take over from their cultural heritage everything that is good and beautiful and noble and develop it in accordance with their own gifts . . . This only a CN school can teach them to do.'

In content, the statement insisted, all teaching must be CN and in no subject might anti-Christian, non-Christian, anti-national or non-national propaganda be made. Mother-tongue should be the most important secular subject and the only medium of instruction. Bilingualism should not be aimed at, and the second language should be taught only when the mother-tongue is mastered. Every nation was rooted in a country allotted to it by God, and geography would give the child a thorough knowledge of his own country so that he would love it when compared and contrasted with others and be prepared to defend it. History should be seen as the fulfilment of God's plan for humanity, and its teaching must include such facts as the Creation, the Fall, the Incarnation, the Life and Death of Christ, the Second Coming and the End of the World. Next to the mother-tongue, the history of the Fatherland was the best channel for 'cultivating the love of one's own which is nationalism'. Single medium schools were provided for. Parents must appoint teachers and keep a watch on the teaching and, through parents, Church vigilance over the doctrine and lives of the teachers must be exercised: unless the teacher was a Christian he was 'a deadly danger to us'. The secular sciences should be taught according to the Christian and National view of life; science should be expounded in a positively Christian light and contrasted with non-Christian science. There should be no attempt to 'reconcile or abolish the fundamental opposition between creator and created, man and beast, individual and community, authority and freedom, which remain in principle insoluble in each other'. The application of these principles was outlined in greater detail in discussing the teaching of the various subjects.

This was the educational plan for South Africa's White children. They were to be streamed into different (English or Afrikaans) schools, not allowed to mix with or get to know those in the other White group, and not allowed to learn each other's language except as a taught classroom language. The fact that large numbers of White South Africans do not subscribe to CN ideals, or even to Calvinism, was ignored. Indeed, CNE, as its South African critics have often pointed out, is neither Christian nor national – nor is it truly education.

'Native education should be based on the principles of trusteeship, non-equality and segregation; its aim should be to inculcate the white man's view of life, especially that of the Boer nation, which is the senior trustee . . .

Owing to the cultural infancy of the native, the state, in co-operation with the protestant churches should at present provide Native education. But the native should be fitted to undertake his own education as soon as possible, under control and guidance from the state.'

From Article 15 of the manifesto of the Institute for Christian National Education published in Afrikaans, February 1948.

Articles 14 and 15 of the pamphlet stretch the CNE principles to cover also the Black child:

'The Coloured man . . . must be educated according to Christian National principles . . . only when he has been Christianised can he and will he be truly happy and secure against his own heathen and all kinds of foreign ideologies which promise him sham happiness, but in the long run make him dissatisfied and unhappy. With regard to the national principle, we believe that the Coloured man can be made race-conscious if the principle of apartheid is strictly applied in education just as in his church life . . . The task of white South Africa to christianise the native and to help him on culturally . . . has already found its closer focus in the principles of trusteeship, non-equality and segregation. Hence native education must be grounded in the life- and world-view of the Whites, more especially of the Boer nation as the senior white trustee of the native . . .'

It was explicitly stated that neither Coloured nor Native education must develop at the cost of White education.

The Sauer Commission, which reported on Nationalist Party policy early in 1948, recommended that education for Africans had to be on a 'firm Christian-National basis, and must take account of the needs and level of development of the mass of natives. It must build character and anchor the native to his national characteristics'. The African would ultimately have to be responsible for the expenditure on and control of his own education under white supervision. He

would also be guided to establish his own social, health and welfare services in the reserves.⁽³⁾

When the Eiselen Commission eventually reported, three years after its appointment, its recommendations, though expressed in the cool and apparently objective language of officialdom, were not much out of line with the emotive CNE programme. It recommended that all education, excepting foreign languages, should be through the medium of the mother-tongue for the first eight school years and mother-tongue instruction should gradually be extended upwards to secondary schools and training institutions. But both official languages should be taught from the earliest school days, 'in such a way that the Bantu* child will be able to find his way in European communities; to follow oral or written instruction; and to carry on a simple conversation with Europeans about his work and other subjects of common interest'. Handwork taught in the first few years of school should aim at inculcating 'the habit of doing manual work'.⁽⁴⁾

Other recommendations of the Commission were that Bantu education should be integrated organically with all other state efforts designed to raise the level of Bantu life; that, to secure efficient coordination of planning, it should be removed from provincial control and be administered by a Department of Bantu Education; that Bantu communities should gradually take over local control from religious bodies, but only when the Bantu governing bodies had achieved 'the threefold test of cash, competence and consent'.⁽⁵⁾

All post-matriculation training should be planned in conjunction with development schemes. For this reason the subsidisation of institutions providing such training should be controlled by the Department of Bantu Education and not by the Department of Education. Bantu should be allowed to attend White institutions only to study such subjects as were temporarily not provided at their own institutions. Facilities should be extended over a ten-year period to provide accommodation for all children aged eight to eleven inclusive (less would be a waste of resources), enough higher primary places for those likely to attend for long enough and high schools for those who could be absorbed into Bantu society. That would entail an approximate doubling of primary and secondary school places and about $2\frac{1}{2}$ times the number of teachers. It envisaged a doubling of expenditure in the next ten years. It was also recommended that the Bantu should find a proportion of the necessary funds themselves.⁽⁶⁾

'Bantu' Education

Within two years the Government had formulated its legislation in the Bantu Education Act of 1953 (amended in 1954, '56, '59 and '61). Among the Nationalists' main ostensible objections to the existing system were that the central government provided most of the funds for Bantu education, but had little control over the way they were spent; there was no uniformity under Provincial control and the missions tended to go their own ways; and the schools were not

*'Bantu' is the official government term for African.

part of the communities they served and the parents had little say in the running of them and so took little interest. The Act was professedly designed to give Africans an education conforming to their needs and opportunities as a separate community. It was bitterly opposed by them and by Whites in missions and liberal organisations concerned with education, who believed that its real purpose was to equip the Africans for a subsidiary role, a conviction strengthened repeatedly by the statements made by Ministers and government supporters.

Dr Verwoerd, for example, then Minister of Native Affairs and later Prime Minister, said during the parliamentary debate on the bill: 'When I have control of native education I will reform it so that natives will be taught from childhood to realize that equality with Europeans is not for them . . . People who believe in equality are not desirable teachers for natives.'⁽⁷⁾

A few months later, in June 1954, Dr Verwoerd amplified his views on the subject: 'There is no place for him (the Bantu) in the European community above the level of certain forms of labour . . . For that reason it is of no avail for him to receive a training which has as its aim absorption in the European community . . . Until now he has been subject to a school system which drew him away from his own community and misled him by showing him the green pastures of European society in which he is not allowed to graze.'⁽⁸⁾

African resistance to Bantu Education

African opinion was incensed by this bare-faced policy of discrimination. Education was seen by many African parents as a door to personal advancement, an escape route for their children from the lower depths of a racially divided society. The Nationalist Government's plans seemed to shut this door and, even more horrifyingly, might condition the next generation to a permanent acceptance of its inferior status.

Reflecting this mood, the annual conference of the African National Congress (ANC) in December 1954 called for a boycott of government-controlled schools. This, it was soon realised, would entail the provision on a voluntary basis, without government assistance, of an alternative school system. This daunting prospect, far beyond the material resources of the ANC, seemed to leave parents with an unhappy choice of exposing their children to Bantu education or giving them no education at all. Since, in the mid-1950's, only one African child in every two of school-going age was actually attending school, it was understandable that parents were unwilling to give up an opportunity to get even some inferior education for those lucky enough to have the opportunity.

The ANC's boycott was due to come into operation on 12 April 1955. But with opinion divided about its feasibility, the boycott when it started affected only some schools on the Reef and in the Eastern Cape. Then the government stepped in to compound the boycotters' difficulties. It announced that all children out of school on 25 April would be expelled and that unlicensed schools were illegal, with a fine of £50 or imprisonment for those found running them.

Under this pressure the school boycott quickly collapsed, although Congress

supporters did manage to run several 'cultural clubs' as a way of evading the prohibition on unlicensed schools. At the end of 1956 there were seven such clubs in the Transvaal catering for some 2,000 children.⁽⁹⁾

African education: the state takes over

The Bantu Education Act dealt only in broad outline with the new system to be introduced; details were to be added by regulations. Control of African education (including teacher-training but not higher education) was transferred from the provincial administrations, which had hitherto controlled the education of all sections of the population, to the central government – that is, to a section of the Native Affairs Department and later to a newly created Department of Bantu Education. There were to be three types of school: Bantu community schools, established or maintained by Bantu Authorities or tribes or communities and in approved cases subsidized by the state; other state-aided schools (including mission schools), which were allowed to exist provided that in the Minister's view such a school did not hinder the establishment of a community or a government school; and, finally, all existing provincial schools which would become government schools. More government schools might be established.

All schools were to be registered and it would be illegal for anyone to establish, conduct or maintain a Bantu school without registration, which was solely at the discretion of the Minister. This struck most seriously at the mission schools.

It is true that in the post-war years Africans, supported by many educationists, expressed growing opposition to mission control of schools. They wished their education to be administered in the same way as that for Whites, and believed that Departmental schools were better off in regard to funds and supplies. Many of the primary schools, run by the missions in remote areas, were overcrowded, inadequately subsidized, with poor quality teachers and poor results. But the missions had also established some fine and famous schools and institutions, producing men whose renown sometimes had reached beyond South Africa's borders. Despite valid criticisms, their precipitate elimination under Bantu Education removed a valuable contribution in funds and teaching which had to be laboriously made up. The Nationalist government's basic objection was that the education the missions gave was not 'Bantu Education' and had to be rooted out. In South Africa, 'the education of the White child prepares him for life in a dominant society, and the education of the Black child for a subordinate society.'⁽¹⁰⁾

Before the end of 1954 the Department of Native Affairs had notified the missions that all training of teachers for State and State-aided schools would be undertaken by the Department only. The missions were given three choices, to be made by the end of that year: to retain their schools and hostels as private, unaided institutions; or to retain control of the schools as state-aided institutions with the subsidy reduced to 75% of the salaries and cost-of-living allowances of approved teachers; or to relinquish control to 'Bantu community organization', i.e. to the government. Where control was retained, the Minister might later

transfer it to a Bantu community organization. African schools in white areas would be subject to the provisions of the Group Areas Act. In 1955 it was announced that all subsidies would be gradually reduced and ended by 1958. In 1962 it was decided to end the grants for hostels, which had either to be maintained unsubsidised or handed over. Churches which decided to retain control of their schools would have to apply for their registration which would subject them to rigid departmental control in regard to syllabuses and their own examinations and certificates would not be recognised.⁽¹¹⁾

The various denominations reacted differently to this draconian take-over law, the Roman Catholics making a particularly great effort to raise sufficient funds to enable them to dispense with government subsidies. However, by 1971 there remained only 438 private schools for Africans – nearly all of them R.C., out of a total of just over 10,000 African schools in South Africa, (whereas in 1953 there had been over 5,000 state-aided mission schools for Africans).⁽¹²⁾

Having begun the phasing out of some 2,000 schools with the accompanying administrative and financial framework, the government introduced its new and centralised structure, which included control both over the schools remaining in the 'white' parts of South Africa, urban and rural, and those (increasing in numbers) in the homelands.

As this centralised structure now stands there are three branches: Education Planning and Training, Education Control and Universities, and Administration. Top level control of all three branches is in the hands of Whites. In its 1971 annual report the Department of Bantu Education claimed 'with satisfaction' that of 80,000 persons, including officials, teachers, members of school boards and others in any way concerned with education services, approximately a mere 2% were white⁽¹³⁾ (this was reduced to 1.5% in 1973). But none of the 50 names listed in 1971 as staffing the three branches, and few of the further 113 Regional Directors and Inspectors in the four provinces appear to be African. Only when it gets to the Homeland Departments of Education and Culture do Africans begin to appear in the posts of Executive Councillor, Planner and Inspector, and even there the Directors (or Secretaries for Education) and Professional Assistants are all whites.⁽¹⁴⁾ In 1973 the position was still the same: African ministers of education in the homelands, but white civil servants holding key positions – and this was after 20 years of 'Bantu Education'. Outside of the homelands, in 1973, there were 43 white inspectors of African schools, but only 1 African inspector. (There were also 102 'Bantu Assistant Inspectors' – a category with no white counterpart in the Department of Bantu Education).⁽¹⁵⁾

School management

Before 'Bantu Education' many African schools, especially community schools, had elected committees consisting mainly of parents, while school boards were functioning in some areas. Under the new scheme the system was much extended. Advisory boards and committees were instituted for government schools and control boards or governing bodies for special and scheduled

schools. Farm, mine, hospital, factory and evening schools were controlled by managers. Control of community schools, which comprised almost half the total, was vested in school boards and committees.

Boards in rural areas were composed of six members, nominated by the district or regional authority, of whom two were from parent members of committees and two were selected for their experience or special knowledge; the remaining two were appointed by the Secretary to represent religious or other interests. On the urban area boards six members were nominated by the Secretary, two by the Bantu Affairs Commissioner, and four were elected by parents on the committees from among their ranks. All appointments are subject to Departmental approval. The boards maintain and control the schools, erect buildings, control equipment, employ teachers, disburse the subsidies for their salaries, investigate complaints and supervise the finances of the committees.⁽¹⁶⁾

School **committees** in rural areas consist of seven members, of whom two are appointed by the Secretary to represent religious or other interests; the remainder are nominated by the Tribal Authority or chief, two members to represent the authority and three from among the parents. In urban areas the Bantu Affairs Commissioner appoints two and the parents elect four members. The Committees raise and control funds, maintain buildings and grounds and advise the boards on the efficiency of the schools and on the appointment or efficiency of teachers.

The extension of the system of educational administration by school boards and committees is generally considered to have greatly broadened community interest and brought parents into participation in school affairs. On the other hand there are serious criticisms by Africans of the system as it now functions. Many, while not wishing to underrate the understanding and acumen of illiterate people, urge that members of school-boards should have some education – at least a degree of literacy. This however is a weakness which will correct itself as the level of schooling rises. More serious are the complaints of nepotism on the part of some chiefs and of the Departmental black-listing of political suspects. There is also strong feeling that appointments should not be subject to Departmental approval. Above all, *the board/committee system gives only administrative powers to Africans – not control of policy*. The Minister retains very wide powers to make regulations governing the control of schools, conditions of service of teachers, syllabuses, media of instruction, school funds and much else. Only with the advent of quasi self-government for some Bantu Homelands has this begun to change in recent years.

‘Bantu education’: finance

There can be no adequate educational system without sufficient expenditure, and African education in South Africa has always had woefully little spent upon it. It is in the field of finance that the deliberate inadequacy and consequent inequity of Bantu Education is immediately revealed. The cardinal principle in the financing of Bantu Education, enunciated by the Sauer Commission of the

Nationalist Party in 1948, in the CNE programme and frequently and less soberly by Ministers and politicians, is that the African must pay for it himself.

This policy is open to an obvious objection, expressed as follows at an Institute of Race Relations conference in 1952: 'Africans should not be expected to pay a direct part in the finding of any portion of the funds used for their education . . . Most of the financial wealth of South Africa is in the hands of Whites . . . Future developments in education for Africans should be financed from general revenue . . . even if this involves additional taxation. Since South Africa's children are her real wealth, and since South Africa urgently needs the fullest development of every single citizen, no child should have its education hindered for purely racial reasons . . .'(17)

With the introduction of the Bantu Education Act in 1953, the Government went back on the reforms of 1945, which had made African education a general charge on the Consolidated Revenue Fund. (The amount spent on each child's education rose consequently from R7.78 in 1945 to R17.99 in 1954). Reverting to the policy adopted in 1922, the Government pegged the sum to be made available to the estimated total paid in 1955 from the Consolidated Revenue Fund, that is R13m, adding to it R1½m for the universities, the balance to consist of four-fifths of the general tax paid by Africans, sums recovered from boarding fees, sales of land and other sources, and any recoverable advances Parliament might make to meet deficits: all to be paid into a new Bantu Education Account.(18)

The immediate result was a steady decline for several years in the amount spent by the government on each African pupil – from R17.08 in 1953/54 to R15.68 in 1955 to R11.56 in 1962/3.(19) Worse, Africans became the only racial group to have to contribute directly to the cost of school building (which for other races is provided from general revenue). It was laid down that lower primary schools had to be built as part of new housing schemes, the costs being recovered gradually by means of a small addition to rentals. This amount has risen as African parents' concern at the shortage of schools has mounted. By 1972 for example, in the huge African city-within-a-city Soweto, near Johannesburg, heads of families were contributing 38 cents a month which was expected to raise some R282,000.(20)

In rural areas, it was made clear, applications for schools were more likely to succeed if accompanied by an undertaking by the African communities to provide the classrooms. Local authorities became responsible for interest and capital redemption and costs of external maintenance, the school committees for internal maintenance and cleaning. School boards were to bear half the capital costs and undertake full responsibility for maintenance and cleaning of post-primary and higher schools. In 1959 the rate of African taxation was raised and from 1 April 1963 the full amount of tax collected went to the Bantu Education Account.(21)

In addition to taxation and local levies, African parents were under pressure to raise considerable further sums to contribute to school funds, which they often managed by such parochial activities as bazaars, concerts and sales of work.

School boards might require compulsory or voluntary contributions from pupils. Schools received assistance in furnishing, but not for those classes run by privately-paid teachers, and most had to find money for replacements. The proportion of teachers privately paid by the parents to supplement the inadequate supply of state-paid teachers rose from 6.4% in 1961 to 17.2% in 1968 (church schools excluded).⁽²²⁾ Equipment for science, technical classes and handicrafts was supplied but replacements had to be paid for. The children themselves had to undertake the daily cleaning of buildings and grounds and much of the care and maintenance of buildings.

Most primary schools were supplied with readers in the mother-tongue and the two official languages, English and Afrikaans. But all stationery required by children and most of the books needed in secondary schools had to be paid for by the parents, and children not properly equipped were not enrolled. In 1967, R367,000 was spent on textbooks in African primary schools – 20 cents a pupil.⁽²³⁾ In 1970 it was said in parliament that the expenditure by the State on text books for each child in each colour group was: White, R8.3; Coloured, R2.4; Indian, R2.6; African, 46 cents.⁽²⁴⁾

With regard to library books the situation was equally discriminatory. In 1954 a one-for-one subsidy was offered subject to various conditions, e.g. that books bought must be on an officially approved list of 1,198 titles. Because parents were unable to raise sufficient funds, this system was replaced in 1967 by grants of R900 to each inspection circuit, and an Inspector of Bantu School Libraries was appointed. In that year, R85,000 was spent on library books for 1.9 million African pupils in the whole country as against R800,00 spent by the Transvaal Education Department alone on library services for its 350,000 White pupils.⁽²⁵⁾ In 1971-2 the Department of Bantu Education issued R1,055,600 worth of text books and it is intended that the supply of free books to secondary pupils will be increased.⁽²⁶⁾

The school-feeding scandal

One of the early casualties of the Nationalist Government's paring down of expenditure on African education was the decision to reduce the grant for school feeding which had been initiated by the Smuts government in 1943 on the basis of 2d. a child a day for children of all races. This had been particularly valuable for the African children who, because of poverty, suffer severely from malnutrition and deficiency diseases which reduce their ability to benefit from their schooling.

The Nationalist Government restricted the scheme. Feeding was confined to children between 6 and 14 years of age in primary schools which already took part in the scheme. The grant was cut to 60% of the previous amount, that is from 2d. to 1.2d. (later raised to 1.25d.) a child. In 1956 African school boards became responsible for deciding whether the scheme would continue in their areas or whether (as the Department advised) the funds should be diverted to the provision of further classrooms, to the erection of which it was prepared to contribute on a one-for-one basis. If school feeding continued no allowance

would be made for buildings or equipment or for preparation of meals, which would become the responsibility of parents, communities and boards, as would purchasing, accounting and distribution. The shortage of accommodation was such that Africans mostly accepted the alternative. The vote for African school feeding dropped from R1,740,000 in 1949-50 to R50,000 in 1963-64, after which it gradually dwindled away.⁽²⁷⁾ School feeding for other population groups was abandoned in later years.

The burden on the parents

The result of all this is that a heavy financial burden rests directly on African parents for the education of their children. According to estimates made in the early 1970's, the cost to parents of stationery, textbooks and contributions to school funds averaged R9 to R16 per pupil a year in the primary classes; R25 to R29 in Forms I to III; and R32 to R37 in Forms IV and V. School uniforms cost from R12 in the lower classes to R17 in the upper classes a year. Because it is government policy to limit school accommodation above lower primary level in the White urban areas, many parents must send their children to boarding schools in the homelands where more schools are available (paid for by the S.A. Bantu Trust). The annual boarding and tuition fees ranged from R64 to R70. A more recent estimate of educational costs to African parents gives the figures as: Lower Primary, R17; Higher Primary, R28; and Secondary, R65; but as there is no breakdown one does not know what items are included.⁽²⁸⁾

At the beginning of each school year there are reports of hundreds of children having to be turned away, particularly at Std. III and Forms I and II levels. The schools are grossly overcrowded and under-equipped. The school boards are paying teachers and often cannot afford to buy furniture. Children double up at the desks, try to write on their laps, or sit on the floor using their benches as desks. An African has described some schools as 'small dark hovels, with small or no windows, without enough desks or chairs, congested with hungry dozing pupils sitting on the floor', throughout summer heat, cold winters and under leaking roofs. In the Bantustans many classrooms are collapsing huts of wattle and daub. Some large schools lack even lavatories – in areas where gastro-enteritis is a major cause of death.⁽²⁹⁾

By 1970, the inadequacy of such rigid methods of financing education, the need and demand for which was rapidly growing, had become only too embarrassingly apparent. (An analysis of the school position in 1972 in Soweto, near Johannesburg, for instance, showed that 1,307 class-rooms existed whereas another 2,016 were needed and the need grew constantly).⁽³⁰⁾

Although the Government had supplemented the sums paid into the Bantu Education Account by charging a few items to the Consolidated Revenue or Loan Accounts, the debt of the Bantu Education Account continued to rise and repayments to the Loan Account could not be met from the proceeds of African taxation. The situation became so urgent that in 1970 the Minister of Finance declared it was pointless to increase the indebtedness of the Account by further

loans and that, until the proceeds of the new PAYE system of African taxation were known, the sum required, (on this occasion R17 million) to supplement the Account's annual revenue should be transferred from the Consolidated Revenue Fund. The next year this sum was raised to R27.8 million. This represented an important modification of policy.⁽³¹⁾

Charity to the rescue

Further assistance was allowed by another policy relaxation: private donations were permitted towards the building or equipping of schools, particularly in urban areas. This allows the liberal conscience to supplement the tightfistedness of officialdom. The Johannesburg *Star* launched the TEACH (teach every African child) Fund, raising R200,000 in the first year. Nine schools of ten classrooms each were built to accommodate 7,000 children. Some of the large business concerns made substantial contributions of buildings. Other businesses and many private and welfare institutions gave furniture and much needed equipment and books. In addition, many chiefs in the Homelands imposed additional levies on overburdened but still willing people for the purpose of building schools, fathers themselves sometimes making the bricks and doing the construction work.⁽³²⁾

In 1972 the Bantu Education Account Abolition Act transferred the assets of the Account to the Consolidated Revenue Fund, writing off the loan outstanding. Bantu Universities, assistance to students and pensions for teachers were to be financed out of appropriations by Parliament. The Bantu Trust and Land Act was amended to provide for the payment of part of the amount accruing from African general taxation to the homelands governments and the remainder (about 14% of the total) to the South African Bantu Trust Account. This part, together with past annual appropriations from the State, would be insufficient for the needs of the Bantu Education Department which would in future be financed from the Consolidated Revenue Fund.

The Deputy Minister of Bantu Administration explained that the country had outgrown the need for the Account, partly because of constitutional developments. Homeland governments were now handling many educational matters. The policy remained, however, that Africans should increasingly make their own contributions through taxation, direct and indirect, which was growing considerably.⁽³³⁾

Thus the Department of Bantu Education remains responsible for the education of Africans in White areas, and in those homelands which are not yet at the stage of 'self-government', for the current expenditure of African universities and for pensions. The homeland government annual estimates of expenditure are referred to the Department for expert scrutiny and advice, and it retains professional control (syllabus, examinations, etc.) throughout South Africa. Even in the relatively non-contentious matter of education, the homeland governments are therefore still a long way from achieving full policy control, while financial autonomy is yet more remote.

CHAPTER III

African education today

The South African government makes big claims for its educational achievements, especially in respect of the African people who comprise two-thirds of the total population. It is pointed out, for example, that total expenditure on African education (excluding capital expenditure, and the university colleges) increased from R18.8 million in 1960/61 to R56.1 million in 1971/72. The total number of African children enrolled at school rose from 1.0 million in 1955 when Bantu Education came into operation, to 2.9 million in 1971, an increase of 190%. In the same period the number of schools rose from 5,801 to 10,551 (an 81.9% increase) and the proportion of the whole African population attending school rose from 10.6% to 18.9%. By 1971 an estimated 76% of African children in the age-group 7-15 were attending school.⁽¹⁾

A Department of Information brochure on education published around 1969 opened with the words:

In standard and scope the education programmes for South Africa's Non-White peoples have no equal on the African continent. The day is not far off when there will be a place at school for every Non-White child of South Africa's various Bantu nations, the Coloured nations, and the Asians. Illiteracy will be wiped out within this generation. Even now, more than four out of every five Bantu children in South Africa are at school . . . (African) school attendance has been increasing by more than 120,000 every year during the past decade or so. Today, most Coloured and Indian children are at school. In fact, education is already compulsory for them in some parts of the country.

Opportunities for vocational and technical education for the Non-White peoples are also being continually expanded. Existing facilities are incomparably better than those of the rest of Africa. There are nearly 4,000 Bantu university graduates in South Africa - nearly twice as many as there are in the whole of negroid Africa put together.⁽²⁾

These grandiose claims need to be examined carefully, for behind the impressive quantitative growth lies a sad picture of qualitative decline and cultural impoverishment. Without looking further than the statistics already cited, it is possible to see that between 1955 and 1971 the overall number of pupils per teacher rose from 45.5 to 57.8. Here is but one indication of qualitative decline. The government's aim is to reduce the ratio to 45:1 by 1980. This contrasts with a pupil/teacher ratio in White schools of 20:1. Also important is the fact that of 10,551 African schools only 453 (4.3%) were secondary schools—a major cause of primary school bottleneck (see p.32.)

Discrimination in expenditure

Expenditure on African education has increased considerably – from R18.8 million in 1960/61 to R92.9 million in 1973/74 (universities excluded).⁽³⁾ However, if the declining value of money is taken into account, and also the fact that the total number of African schoolchildren rose from 1.5 million in 1960 to 3.3 million in 1973,⁽⁴⁾ the increase appears less impressive. More revealing is the comparison of government expenditure on the education of schoolchildren of different races. Calculations made by the South African Institute of Race Relations on the basis of official statistics for the year 1969/70 disclose the following pattern:

Unit cost per pupil (R) ⁽⁵⁾	
Whites	282
Coloureds	73
Indians	81.02
Africans	16.97

Note: in more recent years the official statistics have been presented in a way that makes this direct comparison impossible.

Still more revealing is the pattern of government expenditure on the education of the different racial groups as a whole. In 1972 the Minister of Statistics furnished the following comprehensive figures showing total public expenditure on education in the 1969/70 financial year:

	<i>R million</i>
The provinces (White education)	241.6
Department of National Education (mainly Whites)	53.9
Other government departments (mainly Whites)	18.6
Department of Coloured Affairs	41.9
Department of Indian Affairs	15.8
Department of Bantu Education	49.9
	<hr/>
	421.7 ⁽⁶⁾
	<hr/>

Calculating on the basis of a total expenditure on White education of R300 million and R50 million for Africans in that year, and dividing the totals by the number of children between the ages of 5 and 19 inclusive as revealed by the 1970 census, (1.1 million Whites and 5.8 million Africans)⁽⁷⁾ we can see that expenditure per head of school-going-age population in 1970 was R272.7 for Whites and only R8.62 for Africans. That is to say that for every R1 the government spent on the education of each African child between the age of 5 and 19, it spent R31.6 for each White child in the same age group.

The 'hot seat' system

One of the first innovations under Bantu Education was the double session system, dubbed the 'hot seat' system by African parents. To increase rapidly the

number of children who could be admitted into the existing primary schools, two sessions each of three hours (instead of one of $4\frac{1}{2}$ hours) were introduced into the sub-standards* in 1955. Teachers, classrooms and equipment were to serve two sets of pupils every day. The number of children to each teacher in the infant classes was raised from 90 to 100, allowing 50 children at each session.

By this means many more children gained some schooling. But the losses were considerable. In a four-year Lower Primary course the child lost 600 hours of education. Teachers became tired and bored with the immediate repetition of lessons, so children in the second session made slower progress than those in the first. A three-hour session anyway is too short: teachers find it impossible to know pupils individually; double use of text-books prevents pupils from reading out of school; children in different sessions are kept waiting for brothers and sisters.

The system, intended to be temporary, threatens to become permanent. About half the total number of schools ran double sessions in 1971, the number having risen to 5,391 from 4,843 in 1961. The system applies to over 80% of African children in their first two years at school – children already handicapped by their deprived home circumstances and by the fact that, for economic reasons, they tend to start school at a later age (usually 7) than white children (who start at $5\frac{1}{2}$). Many school boards are extending the system into higher and post-primary classes. By March 1973 11,095 teachers were teaching nearly 995,000 pupils in double shift sessions in African schools.⁽⁸⁾ The system had also been extended to other non-white schools: around the same date 61,098 Coloured children and (in Natal alone) 11,940 Indian children in 51 different schools were involved in double shift sessions.⁽⁹⁾

A variant of the 'hot seat' system (which is also on the increase in Coloured schools) is known as the platoon system, whereby the same set of classrooms is used by different sets of teachers and pupils in morning and afternoon sessions. By this means, in 1971, 35 African schools were catering for 35,000 pupils, 20,700 in the mornings and 14,400 in the afternoons.⁽¹⁰⁾

The primary school bottleneck

If the 'hot seat' system succeeded in helping to boost the total number of African children at school almost three-fold between 1955 and 1971, it did so in the absence of a corresponding expansion of higher primary and secondary school facilities. As a result, by 1973 almost two-thirds of all African children at school were in the lower primary classes; and 94% of all African children at school were in primary classes.⁽¹¹⁾

Of the six million African children who started school between 1955 and 1968, three million dropped out before reaching Std. III, that is, before they became

*The school structure is as follows:

Primary – Lower Primary (L.P.) – Sub standards A & B, and Standards I and II.
– Higher Primary (H.P.) – Standards III–VI.

Secondary – Forms I–V.













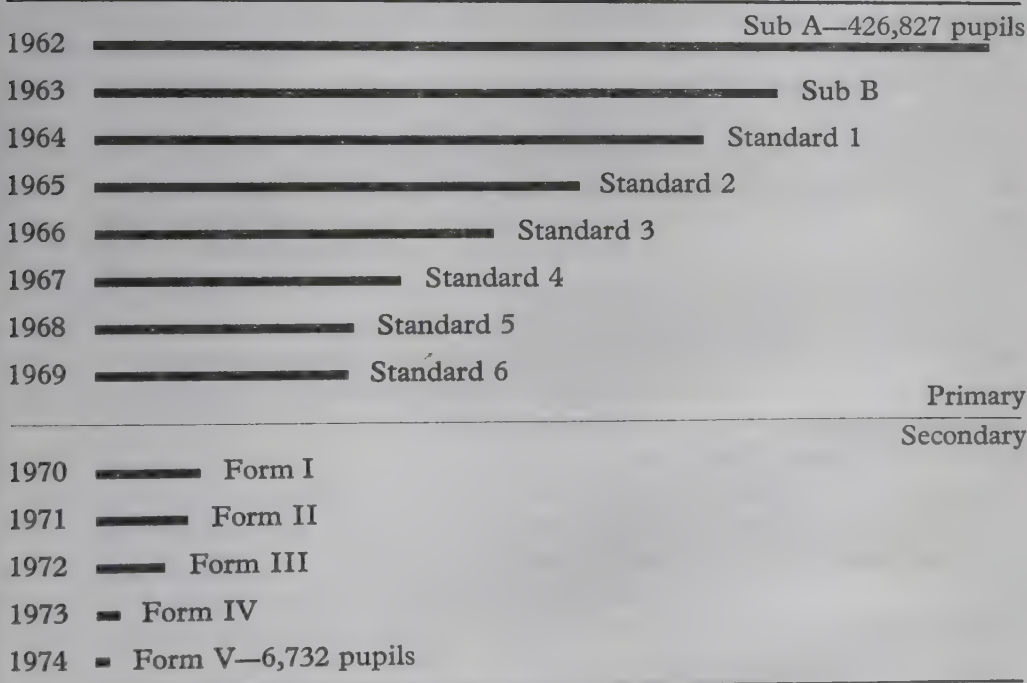
Acknowledgements

- 1 Photograph by Ernest L. Cole
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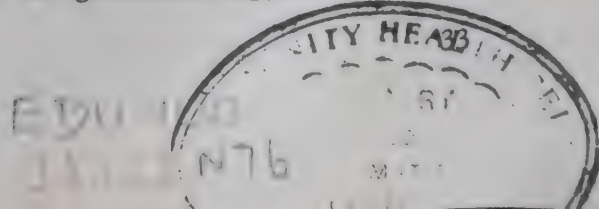
literate, even in their mother-tongue. (One internationally accepted minimum criterion for achieving literacy is five years of schooling). As a result, illiteracy is widespread in the African population – see Table I. A South African educationist, analysing the results of the 1970 census, estimated that 48% of Africans over the age of 15 were illiterate in terms of the UN criterion for ‘functional literacy’ of a minimum of four years’ schooling. Such facts do not prevent apartheid propagandists from making extravagant claims. Dr. J. Adendorff, chairman of the Bantu Investment Corporation, claimed in July 1975 that ‘the level of education among the Bantu people of South Africa is the highest in the whole continent of Africa and approximately 80% of the population can read and write.’⁽¹²⁾

In the past decade the drop-out pattern has stayed fairly constant as follows: after one year about a quarter of the pupils drop out; by the end of the fourth year nearly half have dropped out; and by the time the last year of primary school is reached (Std. VI), nearly three-quarters of all who originally started have dropped out (see Table II and diagram below).

The drop-out rate in African schools: the 1962 intake



This deplorable wastage makes no sense from the point of view of an educational system aimed at those social and cultural goals which elsewhere are taken for granted. But in South Africa education for Blacks is subordinated to the overriding demands of apartheid and racial domination – even if the result is wasteful not just from the point of view of those who are deprived, but also from the government’s point of view. It was the government-appointed Eiselen



Commission which pointed out in 1951 that 'a Bantu child who does not complete at least Std. II has benefitted so little that the money spent on his education is virtually lost.'⁽¹³⁾

Whereas most Third World governments aim at wiping out illiteracy as quickly as possible and at establishing free and compulsory education, the South African government's approach has the effect of delaying the achievement of these goals. The proportion of government expenditure devoted to education as a whole (without distinction as to race) declined from 20.45% in 1960 to 17.47% in 1967. In the same period expenditure on 'security and public order' increased from 12.5% to 20.7%.⁽¹⁴⁾ Despite South Africa's level of industrial development only 4.2% of African pupils were in secondary school in 1969, whereas Zambia starting at independence in 1964 with only 3.5% of its school population in secondary classes, doubled that proportion to 7% by 1970 (see Table III).

The low educational standard prevailing, it is emphasised by educationists and industrialists, deprives the economy of a large pool of the semi-skilled and skilled labour and professional man-power needed in the rapidly developing economy in the Republic and for the development of the Bantustans. The deprivation of the individual Black of the opportunity to develop his full skills and intellectual powers is less frequently deplored. The only cure is free compulsory education, a step not hitherto contemplated for the African by any South African government.

The government's attitude to compulsory education for Africans was spelled out by a Deputy Minister in 1969. Speaking in Parliament Mr G. F. Froneman said that 'compulsory education can be extended to Africans only when they themselves ask for it, when they can finance it themselves, and when their economy can absorb the increased number of educated people.'⁽¹⁵⁾

Perhaps it is only economic and technological necessity which will drive the government in the direction of compulsory education, and pressures of this sort may lie behind a recent report that the Bantu Education Advisory Board is now investigating means of introducing free and compulsory schooling and reducing the entrance age from seven to six years old.⁽¹⁶⁾

A good measure of the success of Bantu Education in preventing Africans from rising in significant numbers to the levels where they could compete with Whites on equal educational terms is to be found in the fact that between 1955 and 1971 the proportion of African schoolchildren enrolled in secondary classes increased from 3.5% to only 4.7%. In the latter year 32.1% of all white pupils were in secondary classes, while the figures for Coloureds and Indians were 12.2% and 26.4% respectively.

Mother tongue education

A major issue in African education is the medium of instruction. Whereas international educational practice tends to favour mother-tongue instruction for progressive reasons, the South African government has sought to impose it on the African people as a means of inculcating tribal consciousness, perpetuating tribal divisions, and reinforcing the gulf between white and black. The African

languages are not used in government, in industry or commerce, in financial or professional circles.

Before 1959 the general practice was gradually to substitute one official language, English or Afrikaans, as medium of instruction from Std. III, the changeover being completed in the primary stage. Tuition in secondary school was given in one and not both official languages. Since 1959 the medium throughout primary schools has been mother-tongue, with instruction in both official languages beginning in the first year, a practice described as imposing 'a linguistic burden unique in the history of education'. Only in secondary school, beginning in Form I, some non-examination subjects, such as religion, physical education, music and, of course, the home language itself continue to be taught in the mother-tongue, and the remaining subjects must be studied half of them through the medium of English and half in Afrikaans – *both* new media introduced at this stage suddenly and simultaneously.⁽¹⁷⁾

The decision to use the mother-tongue throughout primary school, announced in 1955 in preparation for 1959, was opposed by many Africans. An 'All-in' conference in 1956 expressed the opinion 'that mother-tongue instruction would have the effect of reducing the horizons of Africans, cramping them intellectually within the narrow bounds of tribal society, and diminishing the opportunity of inter-communication between the African groups themselves and also with the wider world of which they form a part'. They lived in a technological age and needed a language that could cope with scientific concepts, a mastery of one official language to enter employment and to gain access to world literature.⁽¹⁸⁾ All these considerations were doubtless given full weight by the framers of Bantu Education policy. Departmental committees are at work creating new terms in Bantu languages to describe modern concepts, and lists are circulated from time to time. In due course vocabularies are expected to be adequate for employment opportunities without recourse to a world language and regardless of the advantage of widening horizons to the African.

When Africans have been allowed some measure of latitude to shape their own educational policies, in the Bantu Homelands, they have sought to escape the crippling effects of government policy in respect of the medium of instruction. The experience of the Transkei, the first homeland to be granted limited powers of self-government (and, later, independence), is instructive and in some respects typical. One of the Transkei administration's first actions in 1963 was to appoint the Cingo Commission on the teaching of languages. With its all-African membership (assisted by two White assessors), it was particularly critical of the system of language teaching. It believed that the child should have to contend in its earlier days at school only with learning in its home-language and not until the latter half of the first year should it be introduced to the first official language (i.e. English or Afrikaans). The second official language should not be introduced until the beginning of Std. I, and wherever possible the languages should be taught by different individuals to create as little confusion as possible in the child's mind.

Accordingly the Transkei administration decided in 1964 that in Std. III English or Afrikaans, as the parents wished, should replace Xhosa as the medium of instruction, not because they underrated their own language, but because, being undeveloped and lacking vocabulary, terminology and books, it was inadequate to convey modern concepts, especially scientific ones. Every school chose English as the medium, probably partly due to historical background but probably also to the realisation that 'the whole world speaks English.' As a prominent chief in the Transkei put it: 'Yes, it is a good thing to learn one's mother-tongue. If I know that I am like a chicken pecking inside a hencoop. But when I know the white man's language (English), I can soar like an eagle.' However, for immediate practical reasons most parents wanted their children to learn Afrikaans as well.

The Commission was also critical of South African practice in secondary schools where three languages are used concurrently as media and recommended that one official language only be used as medium though the second should be taught.⁽¹⁹⁾

As a result of much discussion and criticism the Department of Bantu Education, preparing for the introduction of new syllabuses in 1975, decided to reconsider its policy in regard to the language of instruction in African high schools. Stressing that it would be desirable and in the interest of the pupils to use one official language or the other, the Department proposed that school boards should select, according to the dominant language of the Whites in the area. Regional directors and circuit inspectors of Bantu Education in the Republic were consulted, the options being the use of Afrikaans, the use of English or the continued use of both on the present 50-50 basis. The directors and inspectors (most of them white), after consultation with the African school boards, recommended by a majority that the 50-50 arrangement should remain. This decision was contrary to the declared policy of the 20,000-strong African Teachers' Association who have long campaigned for the use of one official language only, expressing a marked preference for English. It also ran against the current in the homelands whose governments, having the right to decide the medium of instruction for the schools they control, have opted for English and also claim the extension of this right to the 'ethnic' schools in the White areas.

To illustrate concretely how the homelands are dealing with this question one can cite the example of Gazankulu, the tiny Northern Transvaal homeland for people designated as belonging to the Shangaan tribe. In June 1973 its Legislative Assembly passed an Education Act which not only empowers the homeland government to make education compulsory, but also makes English the medium of instruction and reduces Afrikaans to the status of a subject and a medium of instruction only for non-examination subjects.⁽²⁰⁾

The South African government's preference for mother-tongue education is part of its general concern to foster ethnic consciousness in the African population. Since 1956, primary schools have been organised in the larger towns as much as possible on an 'ethnic' basis to facilitate mother-tongue teaching and

cater for the seven African languages (corresponding to the political-ethnic homelands or 'nations') recognised for educational purposes. In January 1972 it was announced that an effort was to be made in the larger urban areas in the Transvaal to make all primary schools and school boards homogeneous in medium. Most of the school boards objected. There was growing African resistance to deliberate ethnic separation in the towns on the grounds that such segregation leads to isolation and mistrust, a fostering of tribalism as opposed to the national loyalties that have been slowly strengthening. In addition, the boards argue that children from small ethnic groups have long distances to travel to school and teachers find it more difficult to meet officials for discussions.⁽²¹⁾

By the end of 1972 there were in Soweto (the biggest African 'township' with a population of over $\frac{3}{4}$ million) 18 Xhosa, 13 North Sotho, 11 Shangaan and 7 Venda schools, and probably others for other ethnic groups.⁽²²⁾ Whether this sort of inculcation of ethnic identities is succeeding is hard to determine. The general increase in inter-tribal conflict, both on the mines and in rural areas, possibly suggests that it may be having some effect. On the other hand an attitude survey conducted among 800 Soweto residents in 1973 found that 75% regarded Soweto as their permanent home, 66% declined to consider the homelands as their real home, and 75% thought that tribal affiliations were becoming less important.⁽²³⁾

The drop in standards

As we have seen, the typical African child who manages to get to school starts late and drops out early. The untypical child who battles through to secondary school is confronted with the task of not only learning three languages but also of learning *in* three languages. It is only the fortunate and determined few who reach Form V and matriculation level. In March 1973, when there were 3.3 million African pupils, only 5,736 or 0.17% of the total were in Form V.

The imposition of Bantu Education had a disastrous effect on secondary school standards for several years, from which they have only recently begun to recover. Both the number of candidates and the number of passes amongst Africans taking matriculation examinations declined markedly:*

	Matric. candidates	Matric. exemptions gained	School-leaving certificates gained	Total percentage passes
1956	768	164	190	46.1
1960	716	28	100	17.9

*Pupils at state and state-aided schools only. Private schools excluded.

(24)

After 1962 Africans were allowed to take the Senior Certificate in two stages as an alternative to the examinations of the Joint Matriculation Board (which are open to all races but have to be taken at one time). As a result the pass rate picked up, reaching 61.7% in 1965 but slipping back to 47.5% in 1967. Thereafter it appears to have improved again, to 62.4% in 1971.⁽²⁵⁾ In all this it must be

borne in mind that by the time he or she reaches Junior Certificate level (Form III) the African pupil will have spent at least one year longer at school than his white counterpart.

Church schools appear to have consistently better results than government schools, probably partly because they retain many more White (that is, better trained and more experienced) teachers and can be more selective over pupils. Boarding schools also give better results, probably because conditions are often better than at home – better working conditions, better food and fewer distractions. Parents and others were so shocked by the poor urban matric results in 1967 that they formed an Association for the Educational and Cultural Advancement of the African People of South Africa (ASSECA), one of the aims being to raise funds to improve high school facilities.

Another widely recognised consequence of government policy has been a serious decline in the standard of English in the schools, due to the low quality of the teaching by those (whether Africans or Afrikaans-speaking whites) who teach it, whose mother-tongue is seldom English. Many African teachers are themselves the products of the early years of Bantu Education with the severe linguistic demands it made upon pupils. And today their difficulties are compounded in the homelands schools by having to teach both English and Afrikaans in an environment where there is little occasion to use either language. The Transkei's Cingo Commission, referred to above, expressed particular concern about this decline and proposed several measures to halt it.

Other factors contributing to the decline of standards are the growing size of the classes, and the diminishing proportion of qualified teachers (which will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter). An article in *The Star* (Johannesburg) on 9 September 1972 pointed out that whereas the Eiselen Commission had envisaged that the proportion of graduates among African high school teachers would be raised from 45% to 100%, it had in fact fallen to 22% by 1969.

Farm schools

The educational needs of the children of the Black labourers on white farms have always been gravely neglected. Sometimes the missions were able to establish small primary schools, but only when the landowner approved. He, for the most part, objected to the hours of children's labour lost, and feared that with education his future workers would seek more profitable work elsewhere or, getting ideas above their lowly station, make trouble. On the other hand, some began to be persuaded that the provision of minimal education for their children would attract better workers.

In 1973 there were 3,579 farm schools representing nearly one-third of all African schools and just over 10% of all African schoolchildren.⁽²⁶⁾ A large proportion of the new schools established since the 1953 Act have been on the farms (and these have doubled since 1960), for the legislation was designed with an eye to those farmers who were finding it difficult to retain good labour without schooling opportunities.⁽²⁷⁾

In a policy statement in 1954, Dr Verwoerd said the curricula would include the 'basic idea of teaching the child in order to fit him for farm work'. This was developed by the Minister of Bantu Education in 1959:

'We have made it compulsory that where the farmer wants these facilities, part of the school instruction of those children on the farm of the European farmer must be training in the normal activities on the farm, in order to encourage a feeling of industriousness on the part of those children, and particularly to sharpen in their minds the fact that education does not mean that you must not work with your hands, but to point out to them specifically that manual labour and also manual labour on a farm is just as good a formative and development level as any other subject is. In order to do this, we create the opportunity so that if there is any farmer who has a farm school on his farm and who wishes to make use of the school children under the supervision of the teacher to assist with certain farm activities, this can be arranged in a proper manner to fit in with the curriculum . . .' (28)

Children of other colour groups are not taught this lesson in this particular way.

The schools are managed by the (white) farm owner or his representative (often the missionary) and are permitted only on certain conditions, among them, that the farm must be at least of 200 morgen;* there must be no fewer than 12 pupils, but children from adjacent properties may be admitted with the written consent of the owners of the farms both on which the children live and on which the school is built; subsidies for teachers' salaries may be refused if funds are short. Most of the schools are built by voluntary African labour.

Any white farmer thus has almost total powers over the education of the children of his workers: over whether there shall be a school, over what children should attend and over the appointment and dismissal of teachers.

The schools are graded as Junior schools with 12 to 25 pupils and Senior schools with a larger enrolment. Junior school teachers, mainly women, have very low salaries and the department thus saves money on subsidies. Many of the teachers are given free housing by the farmers. As far as possible, said Dr Verwoerd in 1954, women teachers would be recruited locally 'to combat the dangers of unsuitable teaching in these schools.' (29)

Of the 344,388 African children attending farm schools in 1973, 88% were in lower primary classes and most of the remaining 12% in higher primary. (30) Secondary education is only obtainable in the homelands. In the past many African country children attended schools in the towns, living with relatives in the term time. This is no longer allowed except for those who can travel to and fro daily. The rest, if there are no suitable local schools, must board with families or in school hostels in the rural Bantu areas, which few farm labourers can afford.

*1 morgen = 2½ acres.

CHAPTER IV

Teachers, courses, and pupil discontent

African teachers

In March 1973 there were 58,319 teachers in African schools, of whom all but 47 Coloureds and 839 Whites were African.⁽¹⁾ Of these there were nearly twice as many women as men, the numbers of women having greatly increased after a decision in 1954 to recruit primary school teachers mainly from women, 'in order', said Dr Verwoerd, 'to save money in teacher training and salaries, and also because women are generally better than men in handling small children'.⁽²⁾

Of the total number of teachers 5,252, or 9%, were being privately paid. This proportion has dropped considerably in recent years.⁽³⁾

The African teachers, products of nearly two decades of Bantu education, are poorly qualified. University degrees were held by only 1.69% of African teachers in March 1973. Those with matriculation or equivalent formed 11% of the total, and those with Junior Certificate or equivalent plus a professional qualification formed 46.25%. Teachers with a professional qualification but only Std. 6 formed almost a quarter of the total, and 15.57% had no matriculation, no technical and no professional qualifications. Fewer than 1% had technical or vocational qualifications.⁽⁴⁾

The low educational level of African teachers reflects not only the general inadequacies of Bantu Education but also the poor facilities for training African teachers. In 1971 there were only 35 training institutions, six of them in the White areas and 29 in the homelands — remote, isolated and lacking enough schools for adequate teaching practice.⁽⁵⁾ The courses they provide are: a two-year primary course requiring Junior Certificate as an entrance qualification and based on a new syllabus introduced in 1971; a two-year Junior Secondary course requiring Senior Certificate; and special courses for Arts and Homecraft teachers and Trade Inspectors. Pass rates are high in these courses.

Training for secondary school teachers takes place at the ethnic universities where the courses available include: a two-year secondary teacher's diploma; a post-matric non-graduate three-year university education course; and a University (graduate) Education Diploma course of four years in all.

In addition there is an in-service scheme for training mainly secondary teachers in new subject matter, use of apparatus and modern methods. The centre was completed in 1970 at a cost of R120,000 and provides residential accommodation and full-time staff. Each week 200 teachers selected by the inspectors attend for discussion and experience in, for instance, the use of

scientific and language laboratories. Inspectors also attend, and themselves generally conduct the further training of primary teachers on a circuit basis.

Poor salaries are a major factor in discouraging African graduates and matriculants from the teaching profession. As we have seen, nearly half of all African teachers have only Junior Certificate and a professional qualification. In 1973 their starting salary was R71 per month, whereas that for Coloureds and Indians at the same level of qualification was R123, and that for Whites R209 per month (males). Corresponding figures for women teachers show the same pattern:

African R56	Coloured/Indian R106	White R167
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Teachers with a teaching certificate and a degree received the following monthly starting salaries:

	African	Coloured/Indian	White
Males	132	235	322
Females	123	212	288 ⁽⁶⁾

Some idea of the value of these salaries can be gained by comparing them with Poverty Datum Line (PDL) calculations. The Johannesburg Chamber of Commerce calculated that in January 1973 the PDL for an average African family living in Johannesburg was R78.06 — an estimate that made no provision for recreation, furniture, replacement of household equipment, writing materials or saving for emergencies. A similar calculation for Durban in March 1973, made by University of Natal social scientists, put the figure at R94 a month.

In April 1974 African teachers' salary scales were revised and re-structured, but it is doubtful whether this has closed the salary gap between African teachers and the brown and white colleagues. (However, for the first time, in January 1974 African teachers were granted the same leave privileges as Whites.) Equality in salary scales is not the Nationalist government's policy, as Dr. Verwoerd made clear in 1954. Speaking in the Senate he said:

'The salaries which European teachers enjoy are in no way a fit or permissible criterion for the salaries of Bantu teachers. The European teacher is in the service of the European community and his salary is determined in comparison with the income of the average parent whose children he teaches . . . In precisely the same way the Bantu teacher serves the Bantu community and his salary must be fixed accordingly.'⁽⁷⁾

Furthermore, the African teacher is subject to severe conditions of service, as are Indian and Coloured teachers and black university staff. He may be demoted or discharged not only for inefficiency, but if the Department suspects misconduct. This is intended chiefly to stifle any political activity. There is no appeal or legal representation for the teacher, and a school board reluctant to act may be compelled to do so by cancellation of the offender's salary subsidy. Misconduct may include criticism to the press of government policy, or of any Bantu Authority or school board.

Coloured and Indian teachers

The number of Coloured teachers has been steadily growing and by 1974 had reached nearly twenty thousand, of whom just over two thousand lacked teaching qualifications. This growth has matched that of pupil enrolment, so the teacher/pupil ratio has stayed constant at 1:31 — much better than for Africans, not as good as for Whites.⁽⁸⁾

The problem of unqualified and underqualified teachers is also a feature of Coloured schools. Official statistics regarding Coloured teachers as at March 1973 showed the following:

	Percentage
<i>Professionally qualified and:</i>	
had a university degree	3.7
passed matriculation or equivalent	21.7
passed J.C. or equivalent	69.3
	<hr/>
	94.7
	<hr/>
<i>Not professionally qualified but:</i>	
had a university degree	0.6
passed matriculation or equivalent	1.6
had technical or other qualifications	0.4
held no matriculation or other qualification	2.8
	<hr/>
	5.4
	<hr/>
	(9)

There is a great shortage, particularly, of fully qualified secondary and high school teachers, partly because the number of matriculants is small. Salary scales are not attractive, comparing unfavourably not only with those for Whites, but also with those offered to Coloureds with lower qualifications in the private sector of the economy. Furthermore, the social and cultural conditions in a separated society are found stultifying. Many of the most highly qualified teachers have emigrated to other African states or to Canada or Australia. Possibly as many secondary school teachers leave the profession annually as become qualified.⁽¹⁰⁾

The position in regard to the training of Indian teachers has much improved since the Department of Indian Affairs took over in 1966, when 40% of Indian teachers were not fully qualified. The minimum course for Indian teachers now is a three-year post-School Certificate course at the Springfield Training College in Durban or the Transvaal College of Education. The M.L. Sultan Technical College (see next chapter) provides three-year post-S.C. courses for teachers of subjects such as commerce, home economics and physical education; and there are one-year specialisation courses for serving teachers. At the Univer-

sity of Durban-Westville there are three-year post-matric courses for secondary school teachers and teachers of commercial subjects, and three-year non-graduate and four-year graduate University Education Diploma courses. Courses in remedial education and school librarianship are also available at the university. The total enrolment of teachers in training in 1972 was 1,351.⁽¹¹⁾

At mid-1974 there were 6,638 Indian teachers, of whom 17% had a university degree, and almost 68% had matriculation or equivalent. Less than 4% lacked any professional qualification.⁽¹²⁾ The salary scale for Indians, on a par with the Coloureds, remains considerably lower than the Whites', but higher than the Africans'.

Curricula and courses

Inequality affects every aspect of the black school system. In African schools for example, there are marked weaknesses in the teaching of the official languages, mathematics and science due to shortage of equipment (it is said that some children never see an experiment), shortage of adequate teachers and to difficulties caused by the environmental and cultural backgrounds. The problems created by media and the teaching of languages are to some extent being eased by the introduction of new terminologies, and the serious lack of audio-visual aids and science equipment is slowly being corrected. Special one-year science courses with bursaries have been introduced for pupils with suitable aptitudes.

There are, however, serious and basic distortions in the approach to education which seriously limit both Black and White intellectual development. The Social Studies courses throughout the schools, for example, have been severely criticised by Africans because 'Black children are indoctrinated . . . into blind acceptance of the policy of separate development.'⁽¹³⁾ This stricture, of course, applies equally to the teaching of children of other groups. 'Separate development' is a compulsory section in the Std. VIII syllabus. Because of pressure by CNE fundamentalists, evolution is not in the Transvaal biology syllabus. 'Man is a "Genesis-kind"'. He did not evolve out of other kinds but . . . all human races developed out of Adam — "developed" here is regarded both as progress and as retrogression . . . I claim that my child . . . shall not be taught evolution as a truth in school . . . (I) expect that he shall be taught the creationist view,' a Potchefstroom professor once wrote.⁽¹⁴⁾

At primary school level the curriculum for Africans appears to be designed with a bias against achievement in the sciences and the humanities. According to the authoritative UNESCO study on "*The effects of apartheid on education, science, culture and information*" (2nd edition, 1972),

"roughly 25 per cent of the time is spent in religious instruction and health parades in the lower primary courses . . . children in Standards 1 and 2 (the third and fourth year) follow a curriculum spread over 1,650 minutes, double the time allocated to the lower standards. The school day lasts 5½ hours. Religious instruction and health parades take up 300 minutes

(18%), English Afrikaans and the vernacular 610 minutes (36%), arithmetic 200 minutes (15%), environmental studies 120 minutes (8%), gardening, handicrafts, needlework, singing and writing 420 minutes (25%).

Changes were introduced in 1968. These were based on a 'core syllabus' which would be in use to all schools to ensure a proper basis for the work required for matriculation. In primary schools the result as from 1968 is a greater stress on language usage in English and Afrikaans. General Science replaces nature study in Standards 5 and 6 and there are changes in the social studies syllabus. While those changes do not go far enough to upset the basic structure, they do modify it and bring it closer to the general pattern of education in South Africa."

Indoctrination with a Nationalist Party viewpoint affects pupils of all races — nowhere more clearly than in the teaching of history. The Minister of National (i.e. White) Education, replying un-equivocally in Parliament in June 1971 to criticism of history text-books in White schools, said: 'The presentation of the Nationalist Party's policy in the school syllabus is put in perspective as forming part of the development history of our policy relating to peoples.'

Whites, Coloureds and Indians use the same text books; Africans' are often different, sometimes condensed or revised versions of the others. But they nearly all perpetuate errors of fact and interpretation which modern historians have corrected. The Xhosa, for example, are all too often presented in the old Eastern Frontier terms, as cattle thieves and even murderers, the White farmers as blameless; some children consequently identify with Whites and feel hostility to Xhosa. The Voortrekkers' 'natural distinction of race' is stressed.

The erroneous belief is widely fostered that the Dutch settlers entered and colonised an almost empty land, from which immigrant Africans from the north and east later tried to dislodge them with violence and treachery. It is generally ignored that Black violence was often provoked and that the Africans were defending their homeland, often with chivalry — in many conflicts (on the Eastern Frontiers and in Namibia, for example) it was expressly forbidden to harm White women and children.

While considerable attention is given in text books to tribal life in the reserves, the part of the urban Africans in the country's economic life is thinly dealt with and shown mostly as a political and economic danger and one threatening assimilation.⁽¹⁵⁾

The South African educationist, F. E. Auerbach, has written that in South Africa it has become difficult to teach in a history lesson that the desire of African states to become free of colonial status is similar to that of South Africans to become free of colonial status. It is not forbidden but difficult because White high school pupils find it hard to reconcile it with the common stereotypes in the media depicting Africans as cruel and uncivilised. It is difficult to show nineteenth century farmers' treatment of workers as often cruel and uncivilised.⁽¹⁶⁾

Above all a firm censorship is exercised. Books for school libraries must be

approved. Pictures or films showing Black and White as equals are censored; the S.A. Broadcasting Corporation is strictly controlled; the introduction of television was long delayed because of difficulties of censorship; the Afrikaans press is self-censoring; the English press threatened with greater controls. Many books dealing, for instance, with politics, especially with socialism or communism, are banned as are others presenting modern views on race. Some of these are said to be kept locked in libraries, but available to genuine research students.

The most startling recent example of this stranglehold is the new standard *Oxford History of South Africa*, produced by an academically distinguished group of authorities in their respective fields. Because the publishers were advised that a chapter in the second volume, on African nationalism in South Africa, written by Prof. Leo Kuper, infringed South African law by referring to statements on African nationalism and quoting African leaders who were banned, 'It was with great regret that the decision was taken to exclude this scholarly contribution.' The edition destined for South Africa appeared with 52 blank pages in place of this chapter, inclusion of which would have put publishers, editors and distributors in jeopardy of criminal charges carrying relatively heavy penalties.

Vocational and Technical Training for Africans

In mid-1974 there were just over nine million economically active people in South Africa, of whom Africans comprised 70.4%, Coloureds and Asians 11.2% and Whites 18.4%.⁽¹⁷⁾ Although African workers are the back-bone of the whole economy, they are grossly ill-prepared to play a proper part in the country's industrial growth. But in the past two or three years, when the rate of immigration of skilled whites has begun to decline, and the pressures of demand for semi-skilled labour have brought down many traditional job barriers in spheres such as transport, the Post Office, and even mining and building, the government has been compelled by economic necessity to begin, in a small way, to rectify the long tradition of keeping Africans at the level of unskilled labour.

In the early days at the Cape Sir George Grey, with large Colonial Office subsidies, had introduced industrial education for Africans and Coloureds, long before such training existed for White youth. But this withered away and both employment opportunities and suitable technical and vocational training for Africans were severely limited as they expanded for Whites. White employers required an inexhaustible supply of cheap and unskilled labour; White workers were determined to keep a privileged position as a worker aristocracy on a very high wage structure. There remained, however, a few scattered industrial schools, most of them mission run, some state-aided, some municipally based, with a minute total enrolment.

Existing practice was legally sealed in the Apprenticeship Act of 1922 which, by stipulating a minimum of eight years schooling, gave the Whites a huge competitive advantage and virtually closed all apprenticeships to Blacks, especially to Africans.

The De Villiers commission in 1948, discussing the inequalities of training provided for Whites and for Africans, said: 'The explanation for the lack of progress in industrial training must be found mainly in the limited sphere in which the trained Native worker can find an outlet for the practical application of his skills.' The Commission recommended training institutions should be provided where employment opportunities exist.

The Eiselen Commission, five years later, recommended that the number of places in industrial schools be stepped up from the 2,170 existing in 1949 to 6,000 in 1959, a target that had not been approached by the 1970's.⁽¹⁸⁾

The shortage of skilled man-power, in manufacturing especially, was so acute by the early 1970's, and the pressure from the private sector so great, that in 1972 a special inter-departmental committee was appointed to investigate the training of African workers in the 'White' areas, and to consider 'further steps which can be taken to raise the industrial skills of the African worker in the metropolitan industries.' Its recommendations have been accepted by the government. There will be two types of technical training. The first, initially in eight special centres at a capital cost of R2 million, the running costs to be borne by the government, will be integrated with secondary education in the urban residential areas such as Soweto. Pupils from higher primary and junior secondary schools will attend for one hour a week for subjects such as woodwork, metalwork, mechanics, building welding, electrics, plastics, and punch card operating. The centres will also be open, presumably at night, to adult factory workers.

The second type of training, again at eight centres, will serve industrialists with common needs in the White areas, the government providing the initial capital and industry, with tax relief, meeting the running costs.⁽¹⁹⁾ One section of the motor industry has already announced the establishment of a training school for semi-skilled motor mechanics which hopes to train 5,000 Africans in the next five years. The most skilled jobs are still reserved for White mechanics.⁽²⁰⁾

By April 1975 there were only 49 trade and technical schools for Africans in the whole country, with a total enrolment of 5,227 pupils.⁽²¹⁾ The government's new policy on industrial training is narrow in scope and conception, and gravely under-financed. The pre-service centres in African areas will have to serve 30-40 schools each, and will not be able to take large numbers or provide intensive training. For the rest, government passes the responsibility to the private sector, which is supposed to look after the eight in-service centres when they have been launched with an initial capital outlay of only R150,000 each. By mid-1975 only one of these centres was operating, with 48 pupils doing courses in plumbing, carpentry, cooking etc., varying in length from 3 days to 13 weeks. Even when they are fully established, it is envisaged that these in-service centres will turn out only 1,500 trainees a year, which will do little to meet the rapidly growing need for black skilled labour in the economy.⁽²²⁾

Pupil discontent

Classroom conditions of the sort described in this and the preceeding chapter,

combined with the wider frustrations and indignities of life under apartheid, give rise to much dissatisfaction in the African schools. Occasionally this erupts into riots, strikes and other militant outbursts — less frequently, perhaps, than might be expected (and this must be related to the severe competition for places in the schools and the deprivations and penalties facing those bold enough to rebel), but frequently enough to indicate a pattern. A list of some of the disturbances reported in the press in the past three years will give an impression of both the courage and the desperation of African pupils:

- Cofimvaba High School, Transkei: After a demonstration in June 1973 in which pupils stoned the principal's house, overturned a police car and looted the tuck-shop, some 130 pupils were held in police custody. 118 were charged with malicious damage: 116 were found guilty, and of these 23 who were under 14 years of age were discharged, 9 were fined R40 (or 120 days' imprisonment) and the rest were sentenced to 4–8 cuts depending on their age. The cause of the incident was the failure of the school authorities to supply school uniforms, long promised and paid for two terms previously.⁽²³⁾

- Thirteen pupils at Bensonvale Institute in the Eastern Cape were arrested in October 1973 after disturbances at the school. Later nine were charged with malicious injury to property, seven were released on bail and two were remanded in custody.⁽²⁴⁾

- After unavailing demands for more freedom in their dormitories and classrooms, pupils at St. Francis College, Marianhill, a Catholic school near Durban, launched a mass attack on a staff meeting in March 1974. All 168 boarders were expelled, but with the option of re-applying for admission individually.⁽²⁵⁾

- In 1974 serious disturbances were reported in several parts of the Transkei. At Sibi Secondary School in Matatiele district hostels were closed after pupils rifled a food store and damaged a tribal authority hostel. 250 pupils were sent home and told to reapply for admission. At least one other school in the district was also affected. In the Tabankulu district five primary schools were closed in January, affecting 1,500 pupils, because of simmering unrest, clashes between rival gangs and alleged tribal violence. In June, 50 pupils at Matanzima High School were arrested after a stone-throwing incident.⁽²⁶⁾

- Then in August 1974, after dissatisfaction apparently related to food, pupils at the Ndamase High School at Buntingville, Transkei, burnt down a block of classrooms, a domestic science centre and a library. Seven pupils were charged with arson but the charges were withdrawn. Twenty-two boys were acquitted on charges of malicious damage to property — apparently because the police had difficulty presenting sufficient evidence. While this case was proceeding two girls' dormitories were set on fire in another Transkei school, this time at Umtata. As a result six pupils were convicted of arson and given suspended sentences of three months each, and 29 others were found not guilty.⁽²⁷⁾

- In May 1975 119 pupils of Nchaupe High School, Hammanskraal (near Pretoria), pleaded guilty to charges of public violence, and six others not guilty, after a strike and a riot in which teachers were assaulted, telephone wires cut, and

other damage caused. The causes of the incident were hostel conditions and general school conditions. At first over 300 pupils were arrested, but most were released. About 200 pupils were expelled from the school on the orders of the Secretary for Education of the Bophuthatswana homeland government.⁽²⁸⁾

● After a clash between pupils and the school authorities in May 1975, over 150 pupils of the Zwelitsha High School (Ciskei) were arrested and charged with public violence. Trouble started when pupils sent a petition listing their grievances to the principal. He expelled one boy, and the others gathered in the school grounds calling for the boy's re-instatement. A contingent of police with dogs arrived to disperse the demonstration.⁽²⁹⁾

Official figures suggest that these are not isolated incidents. In 1973, for example, the Minister of Police revealed that during the previous year 296 pupils were arrested in African schools. Although 221 were released without being tried, 10 spent 57 days in custody, 133 spent 16 to 34 days in custody, and a further 153 spent 1–6 days in custody.⁽³⁰⁾ In 1974 police were called to disturbances at African schools on 19 occasions, according to the Minister of Police answering questions in parliament.⁽³¹⁾ Further details given by the Minister on this occasion fail to tally with the press reports cited above e.g. the Minister puts the number arrested and charged at Ndamase High School at 34 (as compared with 58 in the press — *see above*) and the total number of pupils convicted during the year at two (whereas six were convicted in connection with the Ndamase incident alone).

It seems reasonable to assume that neither the press nor the government reports adequately upon the little-known tensions which lie smouldering beneath the surface in African and other Black schools. It can also be seen that much of the unrest focuses immediately on the Blacks in charge — hostel managers, school principals and other teachers — men caught like many chiefs in the White-imposed system and sometimes exercising a petty tyranny for the rewards of status and job security. But such men are pawns, and it is those who control them who, when the front line of authority cannot cope, are ultimately responsible for the ensuing conflict between Black youth and the state, represented by police, the courts and the prisons.

CHAPTER V

Coloureds and Indians

Christian National Education, like separate development, was intended to include Coloureds and Indians, just as much as Whites and Blacks, and it was extended to those groups by the Coloured People's Education Act of 1963 and the Indians Education Act of 1965. (Coloureds comprise 9.3% of the total population and Asians 2.8%).

The 1963 Education Act removed control of all Coloured education from the Provincial and Government departments, vesting it in a Division of Education within the Department of Coloured Affairs. Under the Act no one might manage a private school with more than 14 pupils without registration. If adequate accommodation were available, the Minister might declare school attendance to be compulsory for certain age groups in certain areas. Conditions of service for teachers were laid down. The Minister could ban them from membership or from furthering the objects of any party-political or other organisation, while resistance to any laws and the public criticism (except at a meeting of a recognised teachers' association) of any state department would be deemed misconduct to be answered for before an enquiry. These tough measures reflected the increasing activity of teachers as leaders of the Coloured people's political opposition to apartheid.

An advisory Education Council for Coloured Persons was to be set up, consisting of an officer of the Department and at least eight Coloured members appointed by the State President. The Minister would decide the medium of instruction in schools, but parents would have the final decision if doubt arose as to the home language of any child.

This legislation was introduced against much opposition, both in and out of parliament. Though some Coloureds accepted public ministerial suggestions that better educational facilities would become available, most Coloureds and educationists of other groups opposed the changes, wanting 'education, not Coloured education', and expecting that a separate and inferior type of education would be devised. Fears were expressed that a special Coloured Education department would lead to a different standard from that of Whites and would involve the unnecessary expense of duplication. The Council for Coloured Affairs had only agreed to the transfer of control on certain conditions, including the introduction of compulsory education, the raising of the school leaving age, equal pay for Coloured and White teachers and parallel-medium education in all Coloured schools — and none of these had been complied with.

The Education Council was appointed early in 1964 to advise, particularly, on

training and salaries of Coloured teachers. The Minister warned members not to give information to the Press: no decision of the Council could be published without his authorisation. Regional boards, of which one more than half the total members were government-appointed and the rest elected, were to act as liaison between the school committees and the Department's local representative and to advise on appointments and other such matters. The committees consisted also of some nominated and some elected members.

The Coloured Persons' Representative Council Act of 1968, created a partly nominated, partly elected Coloured Council with limited powers, including some control over education. The Council might draft laws, but they could only be introduced with the approval of the Ministers of Coloured Affairs and of Finance. Numbers of the Coloured community now began to play a far greater part than previously in educational affairs, though legislation and finance remained in White control.

Education for the Coloured community in South Africa is financed from three sources: the Revenue Vote of the Department of Coloured Relations and Rehoboth Affairs (the Department replaced that of Coloured Affairs), the Loan Vote of the Public Works Department and the Revenue and Loan Vote of the Coloured Persons' Representative Council. Education for the Coloureds of Namibia is financed from the South West Africa account. The total expenditure budgeted for 1972-3 was R65.2 million in South Africa and R6.2 million in Namibia, for 523,649 and 19,523 children in school respectively. Expenditure in 1972-73 per student in primary and high schools respectively was R91.21 and R124.52.⁽¹⁾

Education for Coloured children (unlike that for African children, although Coloured parents are at a higher level of earnings generally) is free and the only direct contributions to school funds required from parents are voluntary. The only fees payable are those for special subjects such as music or dancing. Boarding or transport allowances may be made in cases of need. All children in school are provided with free text books, stationery and basic equipment. All school libraries are supplied with a certain number of books annually.

Some Coloureds support the present political framework in which education operates, others merely accept or tolerate it under duress. Once the Department accepted that requirements in Coloured schools were virtually the same as in White schools, the same syllabuses were introduced and accepted as satisfactory.

As far back as 1956 the Botha Commission recommended seven years' compulsory education for Coloured children in the Cape. But the government only began the progressive introduction of compulsory education in 1974, starting with children aged 7 years who live within 5 km. of a suitable school or transport route. By raising the age by one year each year it is expected that by 1979 education will be compulsory for all Coloured children up to 13. Despite the long years of demand for this, the advantages under present conditions have been questioned by some educationists because of the shortage of classroom accommodation, lack of play space and, especially, the lack of pre-school preparation

for those from culturally disadvantaged homes and unable to benefit fully from schooling.

No applicant between $6\frac{1}{2}$ and 9 years of age, it is claimed, is turned away because of lack of accommodation, but this is possible only through the growing use of double session and platoon systems. In the five years to 1973 the numbers of classrooms (512), teachers (1,882) and children (65,867) involved in these systems have doubled.⁽²⁾ Of the half-million Coloured children at school in South Africa in 1972-3 87.9% were in the primary schools.⁽³⁾ There remains a shortage of places for the $5\frac{1}{2}$ -year olds and for those wanting to go on to Std. VI. There are only 39 subsidised nursery schools.

Against this background of restricted facilities at lower levels it is not surprising that examination results in secondary schools leave much to be desired. In the end-of-year examinations in 1973, the pass rate at Junior Certificate level was 64.1% (compared with 78.5% at African schools), and at matriculation/Senior Certificate level it was only 42.4% (compared with 58.7% at African schools).⁽⁴⁾

Coloureds originally succeeded the Malays (brought in the early days as slaves) as the traditional artisans of the Cape, and their opportunities for training and employment have always been somewhat greater than those open to the Africans. However, in more recent times, poverty and the absence of compulsory education have restricted the opportunities for Coloureds to reach the minimum standards required for apprenticeships. As the Apprenticeship Act allowed no differentiation of wages, Coloured youths could not accept lower pay to off-set their educational disabilities. Few schools had the equipment needed for vocational training. In any case there was little stimulus as employment prospects were poor.

In 1961 control of technical and vocational education for Coloureds was transferred from the Department of Education to the Department of Coloured Affairs, and Coloured students were no longer allowed to attend the existing technical colleges (established mainly for Whites). Technical and commercial courses were introduced into high schools, and schools with hostels have been established for apprentices taking the less advanced courses. Mission schools for Coloureds had not been so drastically absorbed as those for Africans, and were in fact encouraged in remote country districts. As well as academic education, many of them with grants-in-aid gave vocational and technical training to over 1,000 boys and girls. Most boys receive practical training at the sites or factories where they are indentured (as Whites are), attending trade school for theoretical study; if they pass the trade tests they qualify in two years instead of the usual five years' apprenticeship as full artisans.

The Peninsula Technical College was opened in 1969 to train teachers of commercial and technical subjects, health inspectors and public health nurses. Courses are run for apprentices in building, engineering and other industries, as well as in public administration and accounting. There is also training for Coloureds in catering, as farm workers and as seamen: skippers, mates, boat-swains and marine engineers.

Having acquired their training, the young Coloured workers still face the barriers of job reservation which precludes them from scheduled types of work, the Group Areas Act and the hostility of White workers, all of which cut them off from the more desirable jobs. Some are taken on in factories at lower wages than Whites, and the government offers decentralisation incentives to manufacturers who settle on the borders of areas of Coloured growth.⁽⁵⁾

The Training Centres for Coloured Cadets scheme, inaugurated in 1969, is intended for those whose educational level is too low to qualify them for the usual training courses. All young Coloured men between the ages of 18 and 24 must register. Those selected are given an initial period of literacy and occupational instruction at a camp at Faure before being placed with selected employers to continue training. The scheme is run on semi-military lines, with court-martial and detention for indiscipline; its professed aim is to provide motivation towards useful and creative living, and to teach discipline, religious and general knowledge and leisure-time activities. It is unpopular, and by 1974 only 40% of the estimated 15,000 youths reaching 18 each year were registering.⁽⁶⁾

Indian education

Having eventually come to accept the Indian community as irreversibly a part of the total population, the South African government, in line with apartheid and CNE thinking, has made provision, as it had for the Coloureds, for an administrative ethnic separation and for a degree of community autonomy. The South African Indian Council was set up under a Minister for Indian Affairs, initially as an advisory body of nominated members only; but in 1972 it was enlarged to include a few elected members and given limited powers to handle matters such as education and community welfare.

The general position of Indian education has been somewhat better than that of Africans or Coloureds because of the greater financial resources of sections of the Indian community.

The education of Indian children (like that for Whites and Coloureds, but not for Africans) was financed from General Revenue. In 1972-3, according to the Minister, a total of R26.4 million was budgetted from the Revenue account, of which R3.9 million was for the University and R1.1 was for technical education. A further sum of R4.5 million for buildings, of which about R2.75 million was for university buildings, came from the Loan Account.⁽⁷⁾

The Indians Education Act of 1965 provided for the establishment at all schools of school committees on which parents served, and by 1971, 329 of these were functioning. An Indian Education Advisory Council, of up to 20 members, was instituted in 1969 to advise the S.A. Indian Council. During 1970 free education for all Indian pupils up to matric was introduced, with a consequent increase in the per capita grants which now stand at R102.93 for primary pupils, R135.19 for high school pupils and R632.80 for Training College students. (This is an all-round increase of about one-third on the 1969/70 figures). The cleaning and maintenance of schools and grounds is undertaken by contractors or by the

Department and (unlike in African schools) does not have to be undertaken by the children. Education aids, to a limited cost ceiling, are supplied on a one-for-one basis and an allocation is made for library books.

In 1972 there were 70 high schools (four of them state-aided), 297 primary schools (163 state-aided) and eight special and other schools, making a total of 375.⁽⁸⁾

There are now over 180,000 Indian children at school, including very nearly all of those between the ages of 7 and 13. In this respect, as in regard to their distribution through the various grades, and overall school standards, Indian pupils are closer to Whites than either Coloureds or Africans. A comparison of the enrolment pattern indicates this clearly:

School enrolment, 1972⁽⁹⁾

	Indians	Whites
Percentage in primary schools	72.2	55.6
Percentage in secondary schools	27.5	26.4
Percentage in combined primary and secondary schools*	—	12.9
Percentage in technical and other schools/classes	0.3	5.1
	100.0	100.0

*separate figures not available

The platoon system has been in operation in some Indian schools for over 20 years, but it has been made less use of in recent years and by 1974 only 14,754 children were involved in it.⁽¹⁰⁾

As long ago as 1946 the Wilks Commission in Natal considered that eight years' compulsory education for Indian children was attainable in the foreseeable future, and recommended that in the interim every child admitted to school should be compelled to remain until he was 13 or had passed Std. IV. But by 1971 even this had not been carried out. The Minister is empowered to make school attendance compulsory by regulation, but difficulty is caused by the shortage of classrooms and the rising cost of building; according to Dr. M. B. Naidoo, Executive Councillor in charge of education, it is intended to extend the regulation annually for nine years, until education is compulsory for all Indian children up to 15 years of age.

The children of other Asian groups have always been in an anomalous position. There are a few schools for Chinese children in the Chinese group areas, but otherwise they may attend only private schools or Church schools for White pupils. Until now Japanese have been limited to Church or private schools. However, at the request of the Japanese community (the Japanese have strong trading ties with South Africa and have long had semi-White status), the Transvaal Education Department is to build a school for Japanese children in a White suburb of Johannesburg.⁽¹¹⁾

A rare 'success story'

In 1890 a youth of 17, M. L. Sultan, arrived in Natal to work as an indentured labourer in the sugar plantations. His period of indenture ended, he settled at Escombe, became a business man and by the time he died in 1953 was rich enough to have formed a Charitable and Educational Trust of R200,000 some of it for the promotion of technical education for Indians (which White officialdom had proved reluctant to undertake), augmenting the existing facilities provided by private initiative.

The M. L. Sultan Technical College is now large, with branches in ten other centres in Natal, and a total enrolment of 6,317 students, (1972), only 1,265 of them full-time. It offers a variety of courses, full-time and part-time. Among these are a Division of Commerce, Secretarial Practice and Management, evening school for commercial and academic subjects, courses in home economics, technology and physical education, and a hotel and catering school. More recently courses have been introduced in subjects such as processing of electronic data and for the training of sewing-machine and telephone mechanics, building draftsmen and orthopaedic technicians. The Natal textile industry has promised jobs to all students who qualify in the new department of textile design. Other new courses prepare students for the examinations of the Institutes of Bankers and of Building Societies, areas in which segregated openings are becoming attainable.

The Department of Indian Affairs also provides some technical and commercial secondary courses in the high schools. A technical high school is planned for Lenasia, the large Indian township near Johannesburg, in the near future.⁽¹²⁾

CHAPTER VI

Universities and Students

1959 was a watershed in the history of university education. It was the year when the government introduced the Extension of University Education Act and thereby extended the principles of CNE to higher education.

Before 1959 the university network comprised:

(a) the four Afrikaans-medium universities of Stellenbosch, Pretoria, Potchefstroom, and the Orange Free State — all strictly for whites only and Calvinist-inspired; (b) the four English-medium universities of Cape Town, Witwatersrand (in Johannesburg), Natal (with campuses at Durban and Pietermaritzburg) and Rhodes (at Grahamstown). These were, to varying degrees, open to Blacks, though they were never fully integrated — socially, residentially or academically. The Nationalist government regarded these 'open' universities as a major centre of liberalism and an undesirable meeting ground between intellectuals of different races. There was also (c) the University of South Africa — the purely correspondence centre which enrolled more students (and more Black students) than any other university. It was, and still is, much closer in its philosophy and approach to the Afrikaans-medium universities than to the English. Finally, (d) the University College of Fort Hare, near Grahamstown, although open to all races, had never attracted more than a handful of whites and by 1959 was predominantly African. It attracted the liveliest African minds, and some of its staff and many of its students were prominent figures in the African National Congress and other political organisations.

The mis-named Extension of University Education Act was passed in 1959. It initiated the process of closing the open universities to blacks and aroused much public discussion and opposition in Parliament and among the open universities, academics and church and liberal bodies. The (Cape) Teachers' Educational and Professional Association, for instance, wrote:

'The essence of a university is to be free to decide what, how and when it shall teach . . . A university should seek and disseminate the *truth* irrespective of *race*. The open universities in South Africa have been among the few places at which the races could meet at the highest intellectual level . . . This contact has been one of the chief means of promoting inter-racial understanding, harmony and peace . . . Any change . . . should be in the direction of increasing social contact and understanding, rather than reducing it.'⁽¹⁾

But, of course, this was exactly what the government did not want.

The Act required the establishment of university colleges for the Blacks to provide 'education of a standard equivalent to that provided by universities established by Acts of Parliament.' Those for Africans were to be financed out of

moneys appropriated by Parliament from the Bantu Education Account and placed under the Minister of Bantu Education. The university colleges for Coloureds and Indians would be controlled by the Departments of Coloured and Indian Affairs and financed from General Revenue. (Ten years later five separate Acts converted them to full universities).

Each college would have a Rector appointed by the Minister, with a (White) Council and a (Non-white*) Advisory Council, all members of both to be appointed by the State President, and a (White) Senate and a (Non-white) Advisory Senate whose members were selected from the teaching staffs by the Minister. The advisory bodies were to be gradually given executive powers until White and Non-white roles would eventually be reversed. The Minister retained almost total powers — over admissions and discharges, salaries and grants, of both staff and students. Whites would be permitted to teach at these colleges, but not to study at them.⁽²⁾

In addition to the usual university regulations relating to payment of fees, attendance at lectures and so on, were others more remarkable, which did not apply in the White universities, and which gave the Rector tight control over student activities. Without Council or Rectorial approval students might not leave the college precincts, form or become members of any student organisation. Apart from meetings of approved student committees, no student meetings could be held without permission in the college precincts, no magazines, pamphlets or notices produced by students could be distributed or displayed, nor could any statement be given to the press.

Later, as discontent became more intense and political feeling more overt, further restrictions were applied. At Fort Hare, for example, students had to apply annually for permission to report for registration, with testimonials of conduct from a clergyman, Bantu Commissioner, magistrate or principal and had to sign a witnessed declaration of compliant behaviour; the Rector could refuse admission without giving reason; students could visit other institutions only with the Rector's permission; students charged with misconduct before the disciplinary committee (of which the Rector was chairman and decided procedure) were allowed no legal representation though they could appeal to the Minister; the Rector might establish student committees and nominate officers.⁽³⁾

By the University College of Fort Hare Act, 1959, control of this old and respected institution was transferred from the Governors to the Minister of Bantu Education against further bitter opposition. The resignation or dismissal of many distinguished members of the staff, both African and White, followed. 'I disposed of their services', the Minister is reported to have said, 'because I will not permit a penny of any funds of which I have control to be paid to any persons who are known to be destroying the Government's policy of apartheid.'⁽⁴⁾ One of those who resigned was Fort Hare's first graduate and a distinguished leader of the African National Congress, Professor Z. K. Matthews. Before his

*The term 'Non-white' was widely used in South Africa up to the 1960s. Now supplanted by the word 'Black', it is still in evidence on signs and notices.

death in 1969, he became Botswana's first representative at the United Nations. The roll-call of well-known Southern African leaders from Fort Hare is a long one. It includes Oliver Tambo, Robert Sobukwe, Govan Mbeki, Duma Nokwe, Dennis Brutus, Gatsha Buthelezi — all South Africans; Seretse Khama, President of Botswana; Ntsu Mokhehle, the Lesotho politician; T. G. Silundika the ZAPU Leader, and Herbert Chitepo the ZANU leader killed in 1975; Malawian political figures Orton Chirwa and the late Henry Chipembere; and Zambian politician Sikota Wina.

In addition to Fort Hare, which was to be eventually confined mainly to the Xhosa, two new colleges for Africans were established: the University College of the North, at Turfloop in the Northern Transvaal, for the Sotho and intended to be Afrikaans in orientation, and the University College of Zululand at Ngoye in Natal for the Zulu. To these three, members of the smaller language groups would go. Handsomely 'architected' in a European pastiche of African building styles and colourful decoration, the last two, particularly, are in remote areas which greatly adds to expense as students have to live in hostels, whereas at the universities in large towns they could often live at home or with friends. They are also completely isolated and cut off from the intellectual, cultural and social life of the nation. There is now a total of three universities for the African population of 17 million compared with ten for the four million Whites. (Two recent universities for whites are the Rand Afrikaans University established in 1966, and that at Port Elizabeth).

In order to meet the demand for university education to be more available in the homelands, the Bantu Universities Amendment Act of 1973 enabled the existing three African universities to establish branches elsewhere, and branches of Fort Hare are planned for the Ciskei and the Transkei.⁽⁵⁾

The **University of the Western Cape**, established at Bellville near Cape Town in 1959, is the 'Coloured' university. Its 1,440 students (1974) can take a variety of degree and diploma courses. Most lectures are given in Afrikaans, the mother-tongue of 80% of the students, and résumés or explanations are provided in English when required (but this has not eliminated the linguistic problems of English-speaking students). Most of the text-books are in English, as are the lectures in nursing, pharmacy and accountancy. In 1973 a faculty of dentistry was established in special premises shared with the University of Stellenbosch. In 1972 the already severe regulations governing student life at UWC were published in the official Government Gazette and acquired the force of law.⁽⁶⁾

The **University of Durban-Westville**, the 'Indian' university, started life on an island near Durban. Salisbury Island, a war-time naval base, is now to be converted back to its former purpose and the University is based on the mainland instead. With 2,342 students in 1974, the University has grown rapidly in recent years, with the proportion of women students increasing from 9.6% of total enrolment in 1961 to 25% in 1972. In January 1974 the first four Indians were appointed to the governing body, the Council.

The Black universities together provide degree or diploma courses for the

examinations of the University of South Africa in the arts, sciences, commerce and administration, education, pharmacy, social science, law, divinity, land surveying, librarianship, agriculture, and teaching. Black medical students still go to the universities of Natal (segregated), the Witwatersrand and Cape Town (no Africans) for courses, especially medicine, not available at their own institutions.

An interesting recent development has been the decision by three Afrikaans universities to admit Black students under certain conditions. In 1972 the University of Potchefstroom decided to admit Black post-graduate students, applications to be treated on their merits. Stellenbosch University was to allow dental students at the Coloured University of the Western Cape to use the facilities of a dental clinic. Finally, the Rand Afrikaans University (RAU) in Johannesburg decided to admit a limited number of Black post-graduate students to use the university facilities while they remained registered at their own Black universities. It is believed that this means that official government approval will not be necessary. It is reported that all teaching staff facilities such as cafeterias, libraries and toilets will be made available. The RAU Rector, Prof. Gerrit Viljoen (who is a member of the Broederbond executive) had for some time been advocating a material change in the traditional attitudes of the Afrikaans universities. The main reason for the change was the 'necessity to bring future Bantu leaders in closer contact with the views and climate of Afrikaans universities'. Hitherto Africans have been orientated towards English language culture.⁽⁷⁾

By 1974 there were some 111,000 students in South Africa's 16 universities. No less than 85.5% of them were Whites, with Africans (7%), Coloureds (2.8%), Indians (4.3%), and Chinese (0.3%) comprising the rest. (For full details see Table IV).⁽⁸⁾

Medical Education

One of the spheres in which the African community, in particular, has been very successfully deprived, and with incalculable results, has been in regard to the training of doctors. Indeed, medical training has been a major casualty of the imposition of apartheid in higher education. From 1957 to 1966 the average annual output of African doctors from the 'open' universities was 13.2. But, despite the complete lack of medical faculties at the new black universities, the government allowed Africans to qualify along with Indians and Coloureds in medicine only at the (segregated) medical school in the otherwise white University of Natal. As a result the average annual output of African doctors fell to 10.2 in the years 1967—71. Thus the numbers of doctors being trained is declining, while the population is growing. By 1972 there was only one African doctor for every 44,400 Africans in the country as a whole, compared with one White doctor for every 400 Whites and one Coloured doctor for every 6,200 Coloureds.⁽⁹⁾ In March 1974, out of a total of 6,066 enrolled medical students in South Africa, no less than 5,239 (86.4%) were Whites and only 272 (3.6%) were Africans.⁽¹⁰⁾

The position is bound to get worse. From 1976, Durban Medical School is

required by the government to take no African students into the first year. From 1978 no African may be admitted to any year of study. By 1981 it is expected that present African medical students will all have completed their medical education and that no more African students will then continue at the Durban campus of the University of Natal. Instead, African students will go to a new school (not yet built) in the Bophuthatswana homeland near Pretoria; Indians to the Westville campus; Coloured students to the University of the Western Cape.

Even in nursing, which has traditionally been an important field for professional advancement among African women, and one of the very few open to them, the available facilities are severely restricted. Thus in 1970 it was estimated that the ratio of nurses to population was as follows:

1 White nurse to 256 Whites

1 Coloured nurse to 1,202 Coloureds

1 African nurse to 1,581 Africans⁽¹¹⁾

All the professions have suffered from the shortcomings both of apartheid-oriented university education in South Africa and of the school system which under-pins higher education. The result is to retard the progress both of the Black community in particular and of the society as a whole. (For statistics, see Table V).

Dominance of White Staff

The Black universities (or 'tribal colleges' as they were described by opponents of government policy in the 1960's) are not only government-dominated, they are also White-dominated, as the following (1974) staff figures clearly reveal:⁽¹²⁾

	The three African Universities		The Indian University of Durban-Westville		The Coloured University of the Western Cape	
	White	African	White	Indian	White	Coloured
Senate	149	9	44	4	45	1
Council	37	13	11	4	11	5
Professors	94	6	32	5	26	—
Senior Lecturers	127	15	50	9	30	1
Lecturers	86	53	56	28	45	17
Junior Lecturers	—	16	13	11	—	—

The graded discrimination which must be all too familiar to the reader by now does not spare the higher intellectual stratum. We can compare salary scales at the Black universities (in rands per annum):

	White		Coloured/Indian		African	
	Lowest	Highest	Lowest	Highest	Lowest	Highest
Professor	7,500	9,900	6,900	9,000	6,000	8,100
Senior Lecturer	6,300	8,100	5,760	7,500	5,040	6,600
Lecturer	4,800	6,900	4,350	6,300	3,900	5,520

(13)

Not only are Black academics paid worse, but their conditions of employment are worse. Where Whites are employees of the University Councils, Blacks are state employees subject to the many restrictions of the civil service regulations in addition to the disciplinary codes of the colleges. Any staff member is guilty of misconduct if he publicly criticises any section of government or provincial administration, or propagates any idea or takes part in any activity calculated to cause sectional antagonism or impede the activities of any government department. The reasons for this sort of control were explicitly stated by Dr Verwoerd, then Minister of Native Affairs, during the debate on the Bantu Education Bill in 1953:

‘... Good race relations are spoilt when the correct education is not given. Above all, good racial relations cannot exist when the education is given under the control of people who create wrong expectations on the part of the Native himself, if such people believe in a policy of equality, if, let me say, for example, a Communist gives this training to the Natives. Such a person will by the very nature of the education he gives, both as regards the content of that education and as regards its spirit, create expectations in the minds of the Bantu which clash with the possibilities of this country. It is therefore necessary that Native education should be controlled in such a way that it should be in accord with the policy of the state.’⁽¹⁴⁾

Student Unrest

Despite every effort to discipline, control and brainwash Black students, their universities have been in a chronic state of unrest almost since their inception. Student resentment against repressive conditions of entry and control combined with general resentment at the imposition of apartheid in higher education and numerous specific grievances have kept the campuses in turmoil. Against the wider political background, mutual distrust between authority and students grows. Complaints, demonstrations, boycotts and strikes are met with suspension, expulsion, arrest and closure of the university. Re-admission is subject to promise of good behaviour. The activities of student organisations are blamed and often banned.

In the University of the Western Cape, for example, tensions reached a climax in protracted disturbances in 1973, in which some of the Coloured members of staff sided with the students. The latter were militant and united in their demands despite the closure of the campus for a month and other pressures from the authorities. The ensuing inquiry conducted by Mr. Justice van Wyk found that among the immediate causes of the disturbances were the activities of the Black student organisation, SASO, (see below), and the incitement of students by exaggeration of unfounded ‘grievances’. No valid grievance, he claimed, was substantiated against the Rector, Senate or Council. The only justified complaints were about the (lack of) autonomy of the university and salaries of the Coloured members of staff. He recommended that all disruption of classes, interference

with staff and other actions aimed at disrupting the normal functions of the University be made illegal.⁽¹⁵⁾

The only charge to have emerged from all this was the appointment of a leading Coloured educationist, Dr. R. E. van der Ross, as Rector. It seems unlikely that this by itself will significantly eliminate the grounds for conflict between students and authorities in future.

Similar onerous conditions at the Indian University of Durban/Westville had led, in 1972, to the banning from the campus of SASO by a unanimous decision of Council, Senate and Advisory Council. The Rector, Prof. S. P. Olivier, warned parents that any student involved in SASO activities might be subject to disciplinary action.⁽¹⁶⁾

Fort Hare, like the other universities, was in a continual state of unrest. Some students (no reason given) were refused re-admission in 1967 and, without certificates of good conduct, were rejected as external students by the University of South Africa, their only alternative. Student demonstrations followed and eventually police with dogs cleared the college. Students were later re-admitted only if their parents brought them back and signed guarantees of good behaviour.

There was no basic change and year by year the tensions continued. In 1972 police action was taken against SASO officers at Fort Hare. Students protested against earlier expulsions, the dictatorial powers of the Rector, intimidatory powers of lecturers and police activity on the campus. After further stress, it was reported that 160 students had left the university.⁽¹⁷⁾ The next year a commission of inquiry, headed by Mr. Justice Munnik, recommended some changes: the appointment of an African dean of students, the co-operation of Africans on to the Council, more adequate recreational facilities, less overcrowding in hostels. Some student complaints were rejected as exaggerated and SASO was criticised.⁽¹⁸⁾ But none of this touched the real trouble, rooted in apartheid itself.

When, at Turfloop, student unrest erupted at a prohibited pro-FRELIMO rally in 1974, police baton-charged the students and later detained some leaders. A one-judge commission of inquiry was appointed, but before it had completed its hearings, the Council of the University announced an immediate ban on all SASO activities and disbanded the students' representative council.⁽¹⁹⁾

It was becoming almost standard practice to appoint one-judge commissions of inquiry into disturbances, which frequently place all blame on students and exonerate university authorities and so, by implication, the educational policies of government which they implement.

Student organisations, White and Black

For many years the two principal student organisations in South Africa were, and still are, White—one predominantly, and the other exclusively. Before 1969 there had been, at various times, Black student organisation both at national level (like the South African Students' Association in the early sixties) and at regional level (like the Cape Peninsula Students Union). But they lacked the advantages, the numbers and the financial strength of their White counterparts.

The National Union of South African Students (NUSAS), founded in 1924 and largely based on the English-medium universities, for over a quarter of a century has consistently rejected racialism in education and propagated a philosophy – liberal, radical, humanist and egalitarian – that is in complete opposition both to government policy and to the values of the government-supporting Afrikaanse Studentebond (ASB). The latter, formed in 1933 as a breakaway from NUSAS and as part of a wider movement to foster the ideas and organisations of an exclusive and racist Afrikaner nationalism, has always been based on the Afrikaans-medium universities, where despite some ‘verligte’ (enlightened, more flexible) trends in the past decade, it still holds sway. The ASB has unashamedly endorsed the ideas of Christian National Education, and regularly aligns itself with current trends in government policy. Its 1975 annual conference overwhelmingly rejected a motion calling for equal pay for equal work for all races and instead called for ‘responsible steps’ to narrow the wage gap⁽²⁰⁾ – which is precisely the government’s position, although in practice its wage adjustments have had the effect of widening the wage gap.

If the Dutch Reformed Church is the Nationalist Party at prayer, the Afrikaanse Studentebond is the Nationalist Party at study. Representing over half the total number of full-time South African students, it is a force to be reckoned with, though one that is little-known in the outside world. NUSAS on the other hand is well-known internationally. Based on the English-speaking white students, it has earned wide respect for its staunch resistance to apartheid and repression. A minority of its members have always been prepared to identify themselves with protests against arbitrary acts and discriminatory policies; many of its leaders have been banned, some have been imprisoned.

Recent years have witnessed intensified pressures upon NUSAS. The Nationalist government has long sought to achieve white unity in support of its basic aims, and the existence of an organisation like NUSAS has been regarded as an irritating, if not dangerously subversive, obstacle to this desired uniformity. At the same time, convinced that the NUSAS leadership is unrepresentative of the mass of English-speaking white students, the government has refrained from bringing to bear its full repressive powers (e.g. it has not banned the organisation) and instead has sought to detach the conservatives from the radicals by singling out the latter for sustained vilification.

In 1972, after a particularly widespread and courageous wave of White and Black student protest against banning and detentions under the Terrorism Act, Prime Minister Vorster set up a Commission of Inquiry into certain organisations (NUSAS, the Student Christian Movement, the Institute of Race Relations and the Christian Institute). The now-notorious Schlebusch Commission duly investigated and criticized the four organisations, directing most of its fire at NUSAS. The publication of its second interim report in February 1973 provided the occasion for the banning of seven NUSAS leaders and one lecturer who was very influential in NUSAS circles. (Shortly afterwards, and with less ceremony, a similar number of Black student leaders were banned). The publication of the

Schlebusch Commission's fourth interim report in August 1974 provided the occasion for the introduction of the Affected Organisations Act, enabling the government to cut off the supply of overseas funds to selected organisations. The first organisations to be declared 'affected' were NUSAS and its cultural and welfare associates.

The government's concern, however, is wider than NUSAS. It has never reconciled itself to the English-medium universities as the heirs to a tradition – liberal in the South African context – which is incompatible with the ideology of Christian Nationalism. It has bullied and threatened so as to procure a voluntary conformity with its own policies and practices. The Van Wyk de Vries Commission, set up by the Minister of National Education in 1968, with a very wide mandate to investigate the White Universities, began unobtrusively enough.⁽²¹⁾ But in 1971 the Minister, Senator J. P. van der Spuy, gave a broad public hint of its expected role. Speaking at a Nationalist Party conference on a resolution asking the government to rid the universities of 'leftist, liberal and communist-inspired lecturers', and to cut or suspend subsidies 'to universities which cannot keep or withhold their students from subversive activities', Senator van der Spuy said the government did not at that stage want to tamper with subsidies to universities, but expected them to get their own house in order. If the Commission found that action was needed, the government would act in a fitting manner.⁽²²⁾

After the student demonstrations of 1972 the Commission made an interim report which was not published at that time. The Schlebusch Commission, it appeared, was to lead the onslaught on the radical white students. When, by early 1975, the bulk of the Schlebusch Commission's work had been done, the Van Wyk de Vries Commission at last published its own findings. They were voluminous, dealing with the role of the universities, their relations with the state (especially as regards financing), academic standards etc. But the political core of the whole was another attack on NUSAS, together with concrete proposals along the lines envisaged in the Nationalist Party's resolution in 1971, to penalize university authorities for the political activities of their students. In parliament Senator Van der Spuy accepted a back-bencher's motion welcoming the report and calling upon the government to give effect to its proposals. But the motion lapsed through expiry of time for debate on it, and the government is not yet (late-1975) fully committed to the draconian measures proposed* – preferring to create a climate in which the English-medium universities might prefer to curb the radicals themselves.⁽²³⁾

The sustained onslaught on NUSAS has not succeeded in intimidating the radical minority on the English-speaking campuses. But it has encouraged the conservatives, and in May 1975 the students of the (Whites-only) University of Natal (Durban) decided by a narrow majority to disaffiliate from NUSAS.⁽²⁴⁾

Before (and even after) 1959 Black students at the 'open' universities were

*The report proposes that where students and staff have taken part in an unlawful demonstration, the university concerned should forfeit from its normal state subsidy an amount of R1,000 per student involved, and an amount equivalent to one year's salary for each member of staff involved.

members of NUSAS. But the creation of new Black campuses thereafter – campuses remote from the main cities where the big English-medium universities are located, and campuses from which NUSAS as an organisation was debarred – changed the situation. It became inevitable that Black students could not find in NUSAS an adequate expression of their interests (if, indeed they had ever sought such a thing in an overwhelmingly white organisation where they were bound to be a minority). In the late 1960s Black disenchantment rose; NUSAS, it was felt, however liberal its professions, had changed nothing in the racial situation and should concentrate on altering white opinion. Preceded by the short-lived but seminal University Christian Movement (1967-72) which attracted radicals of all races, there eventually emerged, in 1969, the Black student organisation SASO (South African Students' Organisation).

From the outset SASO took a militant political stance. Not content only to defend the interests of Black students as such, it sought to develop in the wider black community a new sense of self-awareness, pride, achievement and capabilities. Many SASO leaders were involved in the formation of a new black political party in 1972 – the Black People's Convention – and SASO initiated or participated in a range of community projects (many of them supported by church funds both from the South African Council of Churches and from overseas): literacy campaigns, medical clinics, advice services etc. The philosophy of 'Black Consciousness', with which SASO is most closely associated, proclaims loyalty not only to the universal standards of Western civilization, but also to the indigenous values of black society. Representatives of Black organisations are invited to SASO's congresses, but the leaders of the homeland governments and other government-created bodies are deliberately omitted. SASO has been a sharp critic of the Bantustan policy and its leading spokesmen, and has repeatedly called for international boycotts of South Africa in the field of sport, trade and investment. SASO leaders were also instrumental in creating a Southern African Students Movement in 1973.⁽²⁵⁾

The organisation has paid a high price for its principles. At least 20 of its office-bearers have been banned in the past four years. After the pro-FRELIMO demonstrations of September 1974 dozens of SASO activists were rounded up and detained for varying periods, some eventually being charged under the Terrorism Act. A leading SASO activist, O. R. Tiro, as SRC President at the University of the North, caused a furore at a graduation ceremony in April 1972 with an outspoken attack on Bantu education. He said: 'In South Africa we have Bantu education, Indian education, Coloured education and European education. . . What is there in European education which is not good for the Africans? We want a system of education which is common to all South Africans . . .' After criticising the structure and teaching of the universities, he continued, ' . . . the challenge to every Black graduate. . . lies in the fact that the guilt of all wrongful actions in South Africa, restriction without trial, repugnant legislation, expulsions from schools, rests on all those who do not actively dissociate themselves from and work for the eradication of the system breeding such evils. . . We Black

graduates, by virtue of our age and academic standing, are being called upon to bear greater responsibilities in the liberation of our people. . . Of what use will be your education if you can't help your country in her hour of need? If your education is not linked with the entire continent of Africa it is meaningless. . .'(26) Tiro was expelled. Later he became prominent in the Southern African Students Movement and was assassinated by a parcel bomb in Botswana in February 1974.

Conclusion

The militance of the Black students, their energetic and outward looking approach to their own educational concerns and to the cause of the liberation of their people, coming as they do from a generation which has known only the schools and colleges, the curricula and the methods of 'Bantu education' as introduced a generation ago by the Nationalist government, demonstrate the failure of that policy to condition the majority of the Black intelligentsia to acquiesce in their imposed inferiority. At the same time, the policy has culturally, technically and spiritually impoverished the entire Black community, at all levels of educational achievement, and in this sense it has successfully served its principal function of buttressing the apartheid system and maintaining white domination.

The Black peoples' hopes for education have frequently been expressed. A typical and significant outline of these hopes was contained in the Freedom Charter of 1955, the relevant portion of which reads as follows:

'The doors of learning and culture shall be opened!

The government shall discover, develop and encourage national talent for the enhancement of our cultural life;

All the cultural treasures of mankind shall be open to all, by free exchange of books, ideas and contact with other lands;

The aim of education shall be to teach the youth to love their people and their culture, to honour human brotherhood, liberty and peace;

Education shall be free, compulsory, universal and equal for all children;

Higher education and technical training shall be opened to all by means of state allowances and scholarships awarded on the basis of merit;

Adult illiteracy shall be ended by a mass state education plan;

Teachers shall have all the rights of other citizens;

The colour bar in cultural life, in sport and in education shall be abolished'.

Table I

Educational standards of different race groups – 1970 (to nearest '000)

	Africans	Coloureds	Asians	Whites
Total population	15,036	2,021	618	3,727
No. with no school std.	8,570	770	179	535
– as proportion of total pop.	56.9%	38.0%	29.0%	14.4%
No. with Std. 10 (Matric)	40	19	20	851
– as proportion of total pop.	0.27%	0.94%	3.24%	22.83%

Source: Dept. of Statistics *South African Statistics* 1974 p. 1.24

Table II

The drop-out rate in African schools

(illustrated by the progress through school of the 1962 intake)

Year	Standard or Form	No. of pupils enrolled	
1962	Sub A	426,827	
1963	Sub B	324,024	
1964	1	288,911	Lower primary
1965	2	228,480	
1966	3	188,333	
1967	4	144,252	
1968	5	121,171	Higher primary
1969	6	119,704	
1970	I	49,504	
1971	II	42,509	
1972	III	32,074	Secondary school
1973	IV	11,344	
1974	V	6,732	

Source: Dept. of Bantu Education *Annual Report* 1974
pp. 130—1.

Table III

Education in South Africa and some African countries compared

	South Africa	Africa	
Total expenditure on education as a proportion of Gross National Product	(1970-71) 3.5%	Kenya (1967) 5.6%	Zambia (1967) 6.2%
African pupils in secondary schools as a proportion of total African school population	(1969) 4.2%	Zambia (1970) 7%	Kenya (1970) 9%
Pupil:teacher ratio in all African schools	(1971) 57.8:1	Uganda (1968) 32:1	Kenya (1966) 36:1

Source: Official education statistics cited in H. Lewis-Jones: 'Education for Inferiority' in *Free Southern Africa* Vol 1 No. 1 May 1973.

Table IV

Student enrolment in South Africa - 1974⁽¹⁾

University	White	Coloured	Indian	Chinese	African	Totals
Cape Town	8,449	404	82	31	6	8,972
Durban-Westville	—	—	2,342	—	—	2,342
Fort Hare	—	—	—	—	1,029	1,029
Natal	7,198	91	347	8	256	7,900
Orange Free State	6,685	—	—	—	—	6,685
Port Elizabeth	1,967	—	—	—	—	1,967
Potchefstroom ⁽²⁾	6,415	2	—	—	4	6,421
Pretoria	14,313	—	—	—	—	14,313
Rand Afrikaans	2,143	—	—	—	—	2,143
Rhodes	2,299	—	3	39	1	2,342
Stellenbosch	9,284	—	—	—	—	9,284
South Africa ⁽³⁾	26,981	1,177	1,946	60	3,995	34,159
The North	—	—	—	—	1,509	1,509
The Western Cape	—	1,440	—	—	—	1,440
The Witwatersrand	9,855	28	143	231	42	10,299
Zululand	—	—	—	—	1,003	1,003
Totals	95,589	3,142	4,863	369	7,845	111,808

(1) *Source:* SAIRR *Survey of Race Relations* 1974 p.369

(2) The 6 Black students were post-graduates seconded from the Black Universities

(3) Correspondence courses only. The enrolment includes 1,433 students from outside South Africa

Table V

White supremacy in the professions: selected occupational statistics - 1973

	Whites	Coloureds	Asians	Africans
I. Engineer - civil	4,294	11	4	1
- electrical	2,721	0	17	0
- mechanical	2,600	0	2	0
- mining	423	0	0	0
II. Chemist	1,938	1	11	13
Botanist/Zoologist/ Physiologist, etc.	749	0	20	0
III. Architect	1,856	0	1	0
Quantity surveyor	1,726	12	0	0
Land surveyor	1,061	0	2	16
IV. Medical doctor	8,444	106	460	69
Dentist	1,052	2	29	2
Pharmacist, druggist	4,214	45	45	55
V. Judge, magistrate, Bantu Affairs Commissioner	1,021	0	0	10
Advocate (barrister)	613	0	0	9
Attorney, notary, conveyancer	3,601	15	75	25

Source: Dept. of Labour Manpower Survey No. 10 27 April 1973

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INDEX

- Missions
 - Botha (1956) 50.
 - Dingo (1963) 35, 36, 38.
 - Villiers (1948) 18, 48.
 - Wahlen (1949) 18, 21, 33, 34, 38, 46.
- Inter-departmental Committee on Provincial Education (1935) 15.
- Native Affairs (1941) 16.
- Reuter (1948) 20, 25.
- Schlebusch (1972) 62, 63.
- van Wyk de Vries (1968) 63.
- Wilks (1946) 53.
- Education
 - aims of, 4, 6, 13, 15, 18, 20, 22, 23, 44.
 - Bantu 21—28, 30—38, 40—41, 43—44, 65.
 - Chinese, Japanese, for 53, 58.
 - "Christian National" 14, 16, 18—20, 26, 43, 55, 62.
 - Coloureds, for 9, 11, 13, 15, 16, 20, 32, 34, 41, Ch V, 57, 58.
 - Compulsory
 - for Africans 34.
 - for Coloureds & Indians 30, 50, 53.
 - for Whites 12.
 - Financing 10, 12, 15, 16, 21, 25, 28, 30, 31, 34, 50, 55.
 - Indians, for 13, 16, 32, 34, 41—44, Ch. V, 57, 58.
 - In reserves or homelands 4, 24, 25, 29, 35, 36.
 - Vocational and technical 6, 18, 30, 45f, 51, 52.
 - Whites, for 9, 11, 13, 16, 18, 20, 41, 44, 58.
- Legislation
 - Act of Union (1910) 14.
 - Affected Organisations Act (1974) 63.
 - Apprenticeship Act (1922) 15, 45, 51.
 - Bantu Education Act (1953) 21—23, 26.
 - Bantu Education Account Abolition Act (1972) 29.
 - Bantu Trust & Land Act (1936) 29.
 - Bantu Universities Amendment Act (1973) 53.
 - Cape Education Act (1865) 11.
 - Coloured Peoples Education Act (1963) 49.
 - Coloured Persons Representative Council Act (1968) 50.
 - Extension of University Education Act (1959) 55.
 - Group Areas Act (1949) 24, 52.
 - Indian Education Act (1965) 49, 52.
 - Ordinance of 1828 9.
 - Ordinance of 1856 13.
 - Pass Laws 5.
 - University of Fort Hare Act (1959) 56.
 - Terrorism Act (1967) 64.
- Opposition to government measures
 - by African National Congress 22.
 - by Coloured parents 15.
 - by Coloured teachers 49.
 - by Fort Hare staff 56.
 - by Missionaries & liberals 22.
 - by Pupils 46—48.
 - by Roman Catholic church 24.
 - by Students 7, 56, 60f.
 - by Universities 55.
- Organisations
 - African National Congress 22, 56.
 - Afrikaanse Studentebond 16, 62.
 - African Teachers Association 36.
 - Association for the Educational and Cultural Advancement of the African People of South Africa 38.
 - Cape Teachers Educational and Professional Association 55.
 - Federasie van Afrikaans Kultuur Vereenigings 18.
 - NUSAS (National Union of South African Students) 16, 62—64.
 - South African Students Association 61.
 - SASO (South African Students Organisation) 60, 61, 64.
 - TEACH 29.
 - UNESCO 43.
 - University Christian Movement 64.
- Schools
 - committees and boards 24, 25, 26, 37, 41.
 - double session, in 31, 32, 51.
 - drop-out rate 33.
 - expenditure per pupil 14, 16, 26, 31.
 - libraries and censorship 27, 44, 45.
 - Lovedale 9—11, 14.
 - meals, free 16, 27f.
 - medium of instruction 8, 13, 19, 21, 27, 33, 34f, 43, 49.
 - in Soweto 28, 37.
 - types of,
 - Bantu community, State aided, government 23.
 - farm 12, 38, 39.
 - mission and church 8—13, 22, 23, 24, 38, 51.
 - primary and secondary, defined 32n.
- Teachers 9, 10, 13, 21, 23, 30, 32, 38, 39, Ch. IV, 50.
- Universities Ch. VI.
 - Durban—Westville 43, 57, 59, 61.
 - Fort Hare 14, 55f, 57, 61.
 - Natal (Durban) 58—59, 63.
 - of the North (Turffloep) 57, 64.
 - "open" 55, 58, 62f.
 - Potchefstroom 19, 55.
 - Rand Afrikaans 57, 58.
 - Western Cape 57—59, 60.
 - South Africa 55.

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